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Tales of the
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Red River

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The Red River Kitchen

By NELL MACVICAR

The Manitoba Museum, housed in the Civic Auditorium Building, Winnipeg, holds an interesting replica of the old log cabin kitchen built into the first homes of the Selkirk Settlers. In those days the inner walls were plastered and the fireplace was made of clay. As this room served as kitchen and living room, the floor was often covered with rush mats made by Indians and sometimes stained with vegetable dyes. All the furniture was home-made, but the dishes in many cases were brought out from Scotland and treasured as a bit of home. The kitchen pictured on the cover is of necessity crowded as it is filled with relics from the homes of these and other Red River Settlers.

What stories these relics could tell if they were articulate! Tales of happiness and hard work, of joy and tragedy. The old spinning-wheel could spin many a delightful yarn about the Matheson, Sutherland and Black families, all Selkirk Settlers whose descendants still live in Winnipeg. The wheel was made by a relative of the late Archbishop Matheson and was used in the home of the famous Catherine McPherson who married Alexander Sutherland just after coming to Canada. The spinning-wheel eventually came into the possession of Mrs. Black, a grand-daughter of Catherine McPherson Sutherland, because she had been named after the original Catherine. It stood for years in the Black home until it was loaned by Miss Henrietta Black to the Museum.

All the cloth for garments of early settlers was made at home. The wool was carded and spun and the cloth woven by the women. The making of the garments was a difficult task as no patterns could be secured in the settlement. But lack of patterns did not daunt those resourceful women! An amusing story is told of how the cloth was spread on the floor and the child to be outfitted made to stretch him-

self upon it, while mother marked out a pattern of his breeches. What a time she must have had with rebellious boys! I wonder how the men fared in this pattern-making ordeal.

Historic Table

The table at the back of the picture could relate tales of intrigue and struggle, of misunderstandings and tragedy. It was at this table that Louis Riel sat at breakfast in Fort Garry in 1870 when word came to him that Wolseley's soldiers were marching towards Fort Garry. Realizing that he could not hold the Fort against a trained military detachment, Riel fled up the Red River to St. Norbert. On the table are two large plates used by Riel at that last meal in his stronghold. They were donated to the Museum by Miss A. P. Skipwith whose grandfather acquired them many years ago.

Above the table on the wall is a wooden candle-holder made by Magnus Harper, whose people came over from the Orkneys. The candle was hardened in the old mold hanging beside the fireplace but not visible in the picture. Candle-making days were busy ones in each household, but often brought settlers together for several days, in a spirit of neighbourly helpfulness and fun.

On the left of the window hangs an old coloured print of Robert Burns' cottage, brought from Scotland by a woman who, I feel sure, was many times homesick for "the lone shieling of the misty island." Below the picture is a bit of the new land to which she came; a powder horn of ancient make, once belonging to Mrs. Finch.

The fireplace, in front of which in our picture sit a young mother and child, is surrounded with historic things. We can

(Continued on back cover)



RED RIVER SETTLEMENT—1823

TALES OF THE RED RIVER



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TALES OF THE RED RIVER

Have you heard your parents or grandparents talk about the first white people who came to live in your part of Alberta? They would call these people settlers. You know what a settler is. He is a man who comes to live on new land. Whenever several of these settlers built their homes close together they called the district where they lived a settlement. We are going to start reading today about a settlement that was made over a hundred years ago, not in our own Alberta, but in the province of Manitoba. This settlement was called the Red River Settlement because it was made beside the Red River where the city of Winnipeg now stands.

We know where Edmonton and Calgary are, but where is Winnipeg? On the next page is a map of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Let us look first at our own province, Alberta. Find Edmonton and Calgary. Now let our eyes travel over that province called Saskatchewan, into Manitoba to the east of us. Here is a large lake in the centre of Manitoba. It is called Lake Winnipeg. South of it is the city of Winnipeg.

At Winnipeg two large rivers meet. We will see that their names are the Red and the Assiniboine rivers. Where they join is the south end of the Red River Valley.

We are going to hear about the first white settlers who came to live in that valley.

There are many stories of the people who lived in the settlement when grandmother was a little girl.

We are going to read a few pages of a diary written by one of the first white men who came to the Red River Settlement. Let us call him Uncle John.

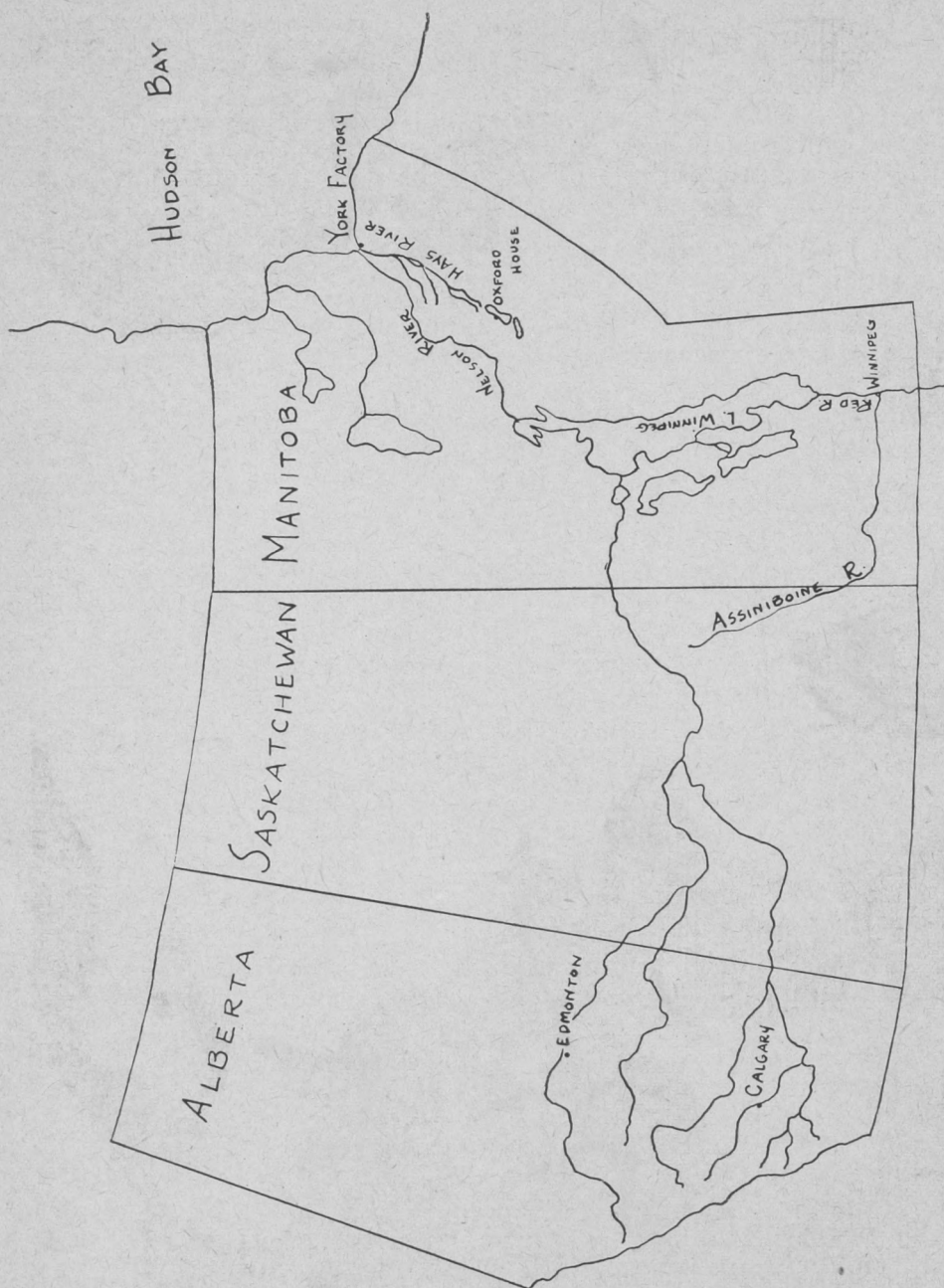
Do we all know what a diary is? It is a book in which one writes of the things that happen day by day.

Most of the men and women who came with Uncle John used to live far across the sea in Scotland. A few came from Ireland.

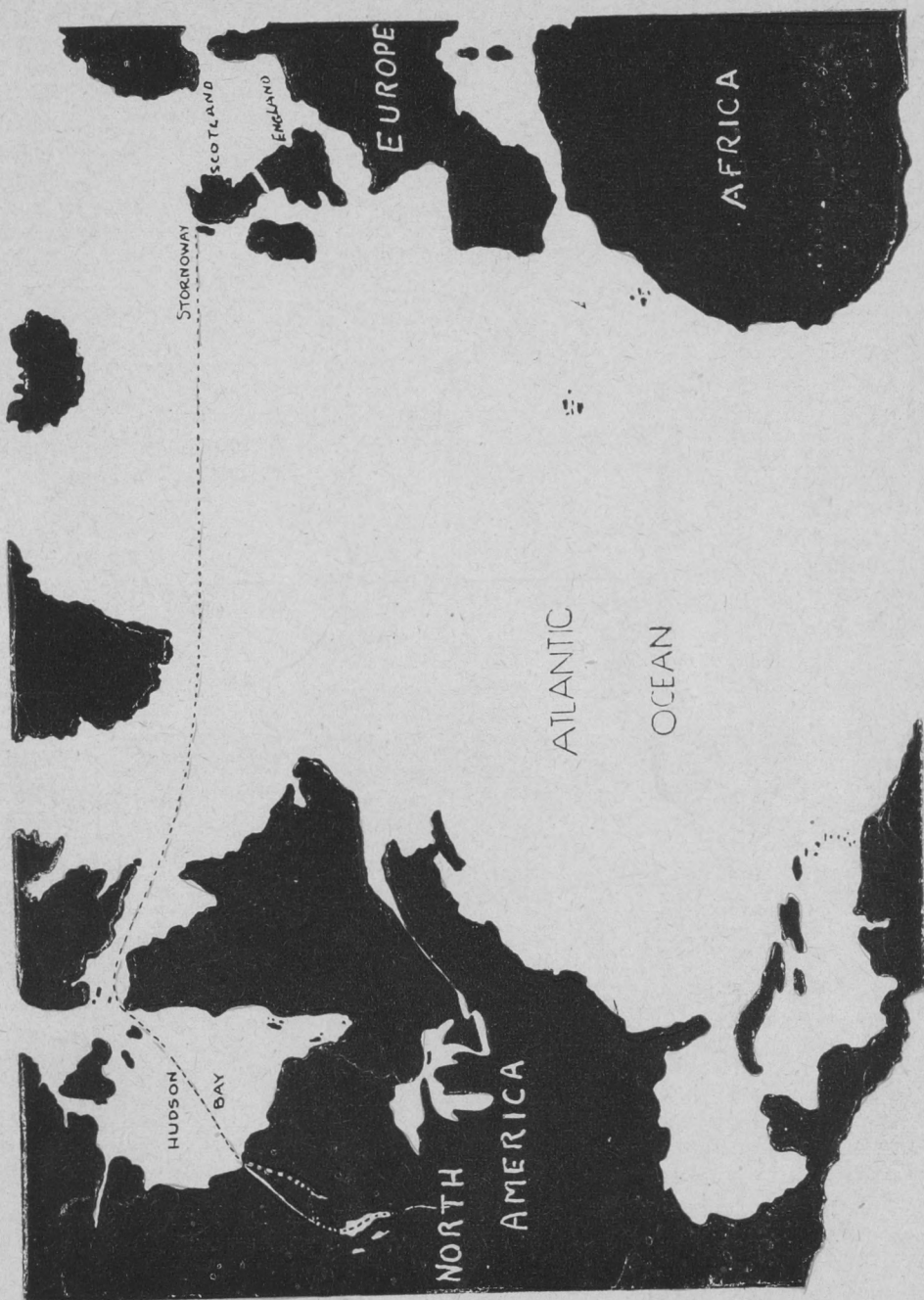
Let us find Scotland on the next map. At the right side of the map we see two small islands close together. One is much larger than the other. Has everyone found them? Let us look at their names. Here is the name "Scotland". It is the upper or northern part of the bigger island. England is the lower part of the big island. The smaller island is called Ireland.

From these islands the settlers crossed the ocean in a small sailing vessel which was driven by wind. The dotted line shows the course they took. Shall we follow them across the Atlantic Ocean and Hudson Bay to York Factory where they landed? From York Factory the settlers travelled in smaller boats to the valley of the Red River where they were going to make their new homes.

In his diary Uncle John tells us why he left Scotland and of the trip on the sea. But let us read it as he wrote it.



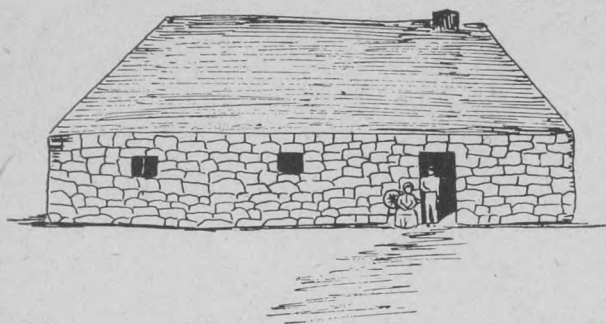
MAP OF ALBERTA, SASKATCHEWAN AND MANITOBA.



A Few Pages from Uncle John's Diary

Scotland, 1810—Sunday, July 9.

"The Lords, or King's Men, own all the land in this district. They are turning many of the fields into sheep pastures and do not need all the workmen. Many of us have nowhere to go and so have been



allowed to build little houses by the roadside. We grow gardens and little patches of wheat and barley. A few chickens and a cow keep us going but it is a poor life for us."

"The land owners want our small farms by the roadside. They are bringing more sheep to the hills every day. If the sheep eat our garden

and wheat, and Lord Thomas takes our land, where shall we go? What can we do?"

Tuesday—

"Cousin David has been put off his land! Lord Thomas came at noon and ordered him and his family out. His men piled their furniture on the road and set fire to the house. The tiny strip of land beside the road won't feed many sheep. Aye, it's a sorry time when sheep are more important than a man, his wife and wee bairns."

Wednesday—

"David tells me that there is talk of help coming from a man called Lord Selkirk, who is giving his time and money to help poor folk like us. It does not seem possible that there is one rich man left who loves the poor. When I see the grabbing and burning all arounds us, it sickens me. There must be a great spirit of kindness in Lord Selkirk's heart."



"Word has come that Lord Selkirk is to be in Farr to-morrow afternoon. David and I will walk over and see what is doing."

Friday—

"We had a long talk with Lord Selkirk. He has some land in the Red River Valley away across the ocean in North America. He would like to start a settlement there. He will help us with the fare. He will also give us land, tools and seed. I cannot believe it! We

asked him how far away it was. I almost felt afraid when he replied, "Oh, it will take three or four months to get there. I'm not promising you an easy life. It will be in the heart of the Indian country. But, man! The soil is deep and fertile. You'll grow great crops. It's not rocky and shallow like these hillsides. No one but yourself will graze sheep on your land in the new country."

"When we told Mother and Cousin Bess they were all for going. The children are talking of nothing but Indians and riding in a big boat on the sea."

"I can't help but admit that the idea strikes me well."

"Aye, me, but it's a long way from these bonnie heather hills, but, I wonder—will the soil grow more food than this? Will Lord Thomas come to-morrow or next week to take this land?"

"I must decide, I must decide."

Sunday—

"Our minister, Mr. McTavish, gave us a long talk on Lord Selkirk this morning. What a man he is! Mr. McTavish says he has been sent from heaven to help us. Lord Selkirk's family are going short of things so that he can give more to help us poor, starving folk. Mr. McTavish thinks we should go to Lord Selkirk's settlement. He prayed for a blessing on Lord Selkirk, and for God to help us decide."

Monday—

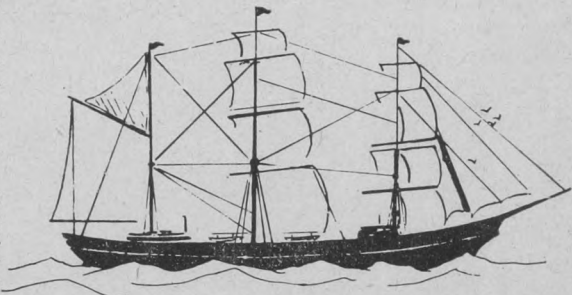
"David and I talked long into the night. We have decided to go with the first ship. Mother, Bess and the children can come next year when we have the house built and our wee bit of barley and wheat sown."

July 25, 1811—

"It is a year since I wrote in this book. We sail for our new homes to-morrow. Already I feel happier. It's been a hard year but things look brighter now. Lord Thomas took our land in April and burned our little cottage to the ground. I thought Mother and the children would never stop crying. It seemed so hard to find words for our evening prayers. I feel now that things will be all right in our new homes across the sea. Mother, Bess and the children have a tiny cottage in Farr. My John and David's Dougal are working in the woollen mill. They will manage nicely until next year."

August 25, 1811—

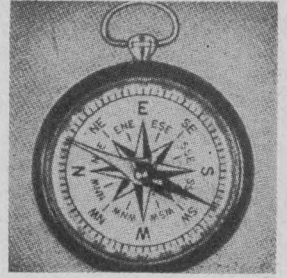
"We have been on the sea for a month now. There are over seventy of us packed into this boat. We are tired of the wind and waves. Last night a real gale blew up. The sails had to be lowered and all made safe. One moment we were on top of a wave higher than the church steeple, and the next we were dashed into a deep valley of water. We could see nothing but water towering around and above us like high cliffs. I expected the ship to be broken to pieces and that we



should all be at the bottom of the sea. I do hope Mother and the children have a better sailing."

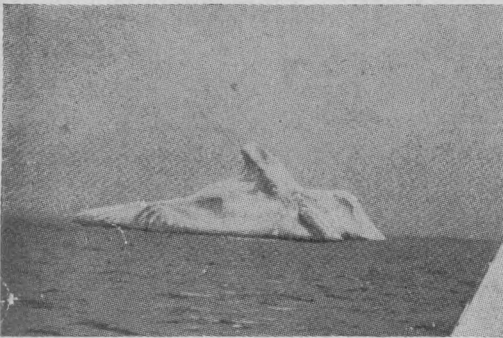
"The Captain called us together during the mate's watch and told us that we were in God's hands. He asked us to pray. Never were prayers said more earnestly, and they were answered too. By morning the storm blew over. We have had a very pleasant day with a good breeze for sailing."

"Sometimes I wonder if we shall ever reach land. After the storm, I asked the Captain how he knew we were going in the right direction. He showed me the little instrument he used to tell which way to go. It is called a mariner's compass. It shows the directions and how far we are from the North Pole."



"How I long for one of Mother's oat cakes and plum puddings! We are all tired of salt meat and bannock. The cook does his best to make the food tasty but the meat is so salty that he can only boil it. Otherwise we cannot eat it. We all look forward to Sunday night's supper, when we have cheese with our bannock."

September 1, 1811—



"I am so tired of seeing nothing but water. I had given up hope of seeing anything beautiful out at sea, but I was wrong. Last night in the moonlight we saw an iceberg float quietly by. What a wonderful sight! It towered above us as large as the castle of Langley Craig. The light from the moon lit up the white points and spires. The main

body of the iceberg was of the deepest blue I have ever seen. Thin little spires of pale green ice sparkled in the moonlight as if they were covered with diamonds."

"Although an iceberg is very beautiful, it is the most dangerous thing in the sea. Most of the iceberg is under the water. Only one-tenth of it can be seen. The part under water may have a wide, ragged shelf jutting out on all sides. If the ship strikes this shelf, it will be broken into pieces and will sink. The iceberg floated slowly by and left waves so high that our boat bobbed up and down for half an hour. We said a prayer of thankfulness as the iceberg went past."



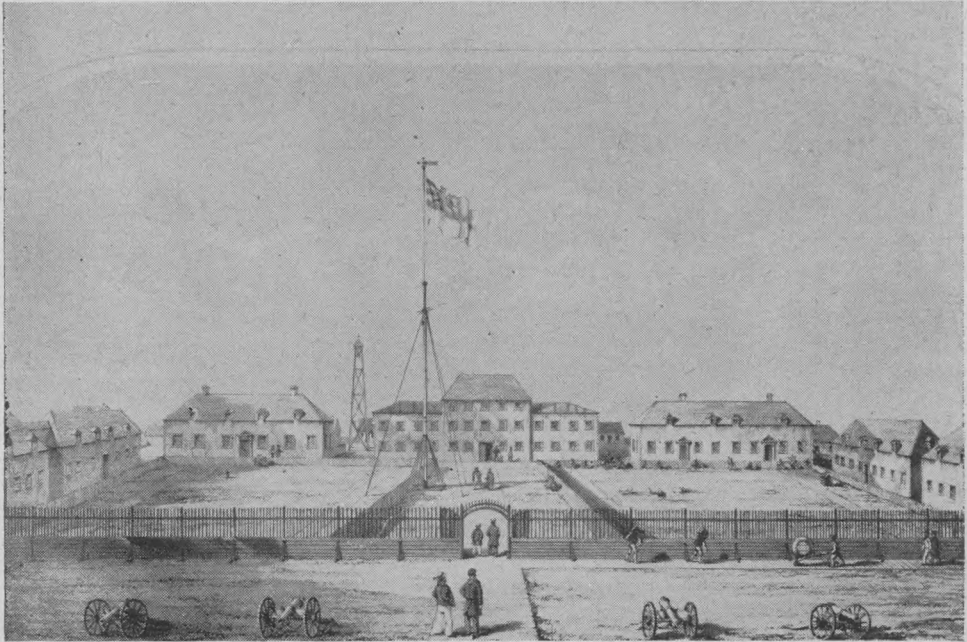
September 11—

"We are now in the Hudson Bay. The water is much calmer, but it turns very cold at night. The captain says that we should reach York Factory within two weeks but the wind is not strong enough to blow out our sails and we do not travel very fast."

"David is ill. He looks very bad. His skin is pale with dark spots on it; his gums are swollen and sore and some of his teeth seem to be getting loose. Each day he feels weaker and he doesn't want to eat. Captain Macdonell is afraid he has scurvy. It is this salt meat and bannock that is causing the trouble. When we have fresh vegetables such as potatoes, cabbages, turnips and the like, at home, we never take scurvy. Captain Macdonell says that David can be cured when we reach land. A kind of tea made from the bark of the spruce tree will help him. I can't help but worry, though. We spend long hours reading the Bible and praying for an end to our journey."



"I saved my Sunday cheese for David and gave it to him on Wednesday. He had eaten it before he remembered that we didn't have cheese on Wednesday. How he scolded! But it was worth eating dry bannock to see once more the sparkle in his eye."



YORK FACTORY.

—Courtesy Confederation Life Insurance Co.

"Last night I saw a rat run along the top of Jim O'Grady's bunk. I hope my wheat and barley are safe down in the hold. I didn't tell David."

September 23—

"God be praised! We are just off shore at York Factory. We came in sight of the post about an hour ago. We saw a light on shore. What a shout went up! David is a little better, so Jim and I took him up on deck to see the light. He seems so much better since then."

The captain called us all together on deck and held a service. I'm sure the people on shore must have heard us singing, "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow."

September 24—



SETTLERS ARRIVAL AT YORK FACTORY

was able to walk down the gang plank by himself."

"We are on land again. How good it feels under our feet! We were all up long before the gun this morning. We were anxious to see York Factory in the first light of day."

"There it was on the snow covered bank of the river. It is just a few buildings surrounded by a low wall of upright logs. The Union Jack was a bright spot of color against the blue sky. Otherwise, I must say it all looked rather bleak!"

Our boat slowly floated up to the wharf. All was hustle and bustle. We did so want to land. David has been much better to-day and



DOG TEAM

"William Auld, the Hudson Bay factor, with some of his men, met us on shore. He extended his hand in welcome and helped Captain Macdonell step onto the land."

"Our captain lined us up on shore. To the tune of "Bonnie Dundee", played by Robbie Donaldson on the bagpipes, we marched up the road to the fort. We were stared at by Indians and barked at by dogs."



HUSKY

"The dogs are beautiful, big beasts not like our dogs at home. They are larger with broader chests, longer fur and long, curled-up tails. Their broad heads and sharp, pointed ears give them a savage look. I hear they are part wolf. The Indians and traders use them to pull sleighs across the snow."

"Once inside the gate, Factor Auld lost no time in telling us that there was no room for us within the walls."

"He suggested that we go north to the Nelson River where the hunting was better and build log cabins for ourselves."

"Why not go straight on to Red River, Captain Macdonell?" we all asked.

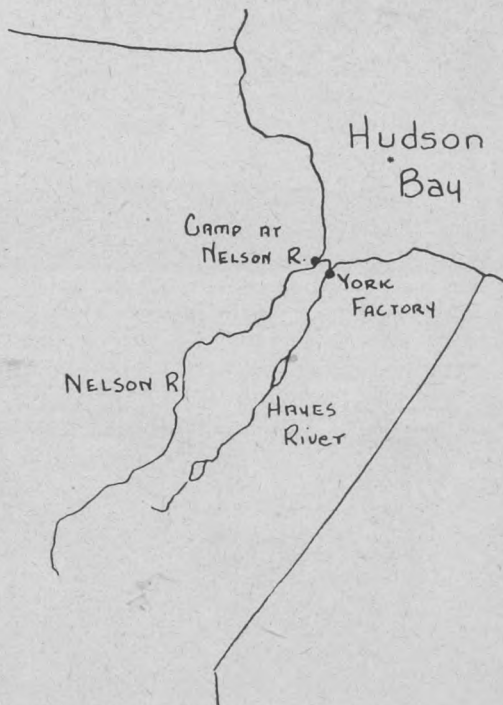
"Captain Macdonell quietly replied, "The rivers will be frozen over long

since. It is better to stay until spring. We know we can get food here. We shall go to the Nelson River. It is just 23 miles from here. We can build ourselves some cabins from the trees growing on the banks of the river. We shall put up our tents and live in them until the cabins are finished."

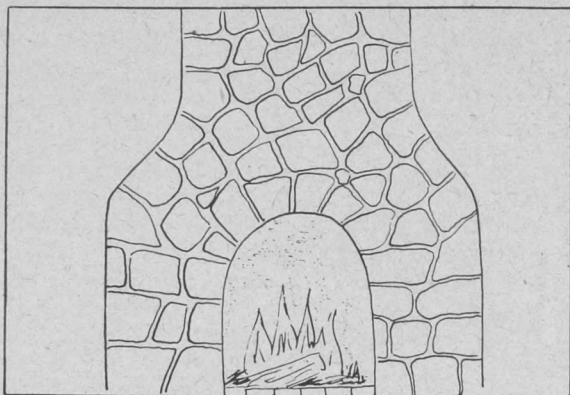
November 15—

"We moved into our log cabin to-day. We have built five long, low cabins under a high cliff. This will shelter us from the cold wind that sweeps down from the north."

"We did not know that it could ever be so cold. Is it possible that all that snow has fallen from the clouds? Some days, with the wind and snow, it is impossible to leave the cabins at all. We must always



have plenty of wood on hand for the big, stone fireplaces we built at each end of the huts."



FIREPLACE

"Ah, but Man! The fire roaring up the huge chimney reminds us of home. Every evening we gather round the fires and such sing-songs we do have!"

"On still, clear nights we can hear the wolves howling out on the hills. Often just at dusk we see their dim, grey forms slinking along the river bank."

"I often go out at night to watch the northern lights. The long streamers of red, blue, yellow and green are very beautiful. It was so still and cold last night that I could hear them. I am not surprised that the Indians think that the lights are the war bonnets of the Indians who have gone to the Happy Hunting Grounds (the Indians' Heaven) as they dance around their fires."

"Davie and all those that were sick are quite well again. We have plenty of fresh meat and must drink each day a cup of tea made by boiling the bark of the spruce tree. It is very bitter and some of the men grumble about it. Davie and I drink ours even if it is bitter. We would rather drink a cup of bitter tea than have scurvy."



HUTS ON RIVER BANK



WOLF

December 25, Christmas Day—

"Time is passing very slowly. Captain Macdonell called us together in the big dining hut for a special service. He spoke to us about the hard time we had had. He said that there were still hard times to come, but he told us we should make plans for our work in the spring."

"He then thanked God for His goodness to us. He prayed for an early spring so that we could soon be building homes in the Red River Valley."

New Year's Day, 1812—

"New Year's Day in Canada! It was a sorry excuse for the celebrations in old Scotland, but we made the best of it. Some of the men have been hunting deer and partridge so we had a change from the usual moose meat. The cooks also made plum puddings from some currants and meal we were able to get in York Factory. They weren't as good as Mother's but they were a very welcome change."

"After dinner Robbie played the bagpipes. We sang the old Scotch songs we used to sing at home. Captain Macdonell led us in a short prayer before we turned in for the night."

April, 1812—Still in the huts on Nelson River.

"Nearly four months have gone by since I last wrote in this book. The snow and cold still hang on. The sheep will be grazing on the hillsides above Farr. I wonder if Mother will start a garden? She will, no doubt, put in some things that will grow before July. I don't like to think of our women and children living in these cabins next winter. Perhaps they will get an earlier start and be able to get



YORK BOAT AND ITS CREW

right through to Red River. We are almost sure to have the houses built before they arrive."

"Captain Macdonell is wonderful! He must be dreadfully discouraged at times. It is so hard to get the men to hunt and work. Davie and I have learned to shoot fairly well. We each brought home a deer last week. All the men have been busy this winter. We have built four large flat-bottomed boats to take us up the river and across Lake Winnipeg. How anxious I am to be on the way!"

June 29, 1812—

"We are back at York Factory. We moved here and set up our tents outside the fort walls when the Nelson River rose and flooded the cabins that we built there. We must wait until the Indians come down the river with their furs. They will guide us on our way to the Red River Valley when they return to their home near there."

"All is hustle and bustle getting our things ready to pack on the boats. My wheat and barley are still safe. I hope they won't get wet in these open boats."



PORTAGE

July 5—

"We are off!"

July 21—

"We have arrived at Oxford House. Captain Macdonell says we have made the trip in good time."

"We travelled thirteen miles in our large, flat-bottomed boats to-day. We used long poles to push them ahead in the water. This was hard work because we were going upstream. We also had some very hard portages to make. When we came to the waterfall, we pulled the boat up on land and emptied everything out of it. Six of us carried the boat on our shoulders up over the steep hill and launched it in the river above us. The rest of the company carried the bundles of goods to the boats on the water above the falls. This manner of passing around a waterfall is called a portage."



WATERFALL

"The country is beautiful! At first we travelled through very rocky country. I have never seen so many small waterfalls nor climbed so many rocky hills."

"When we reached the lakes travelling was much easier. Such lakes! Long stretches of water as clear as mirrors! We poled for miles and miles. Here, too, we could use the sail."



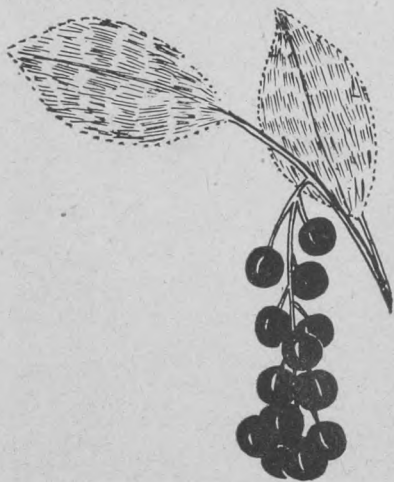
LONG LAKE



FLOCK OF BIRDS RISING OFF THE WATER

"The country around the lakes is low and marshy. The trees are short and crooked except for the tamaracks which stand straight and tall."

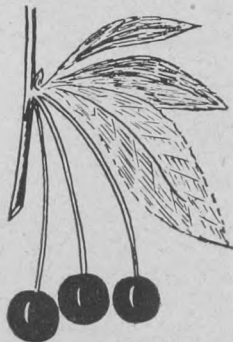
"And the birds! They sing from morning to night from the tops of the taller trees. Little yellow warblers flit from branch to branch. The blackbirds amaze me as they cling to the reeds and rushes. Their bright, red shoulders on their black coats remind me of soldiers. No soldiers sing as sweetly as they do. The robins are not like ours in Scotland, but their "Cheer up! Cheerily!" in the early mornings starts us off on our journey with light hearts."



CHOKE CHERRY



SASKATOON



PIN CHERRY



"Huge flocks of ducks, geese, and snipes rise in clouds from the water as we aproach them. I love to watch the long-legged curlews standing in the water at the edge of the lake. Their brown bodies are almost the same color as the pebbles on the beach."

"Mother and the children will enjoy the flowers that cover the banks of the river and grow along the trail."

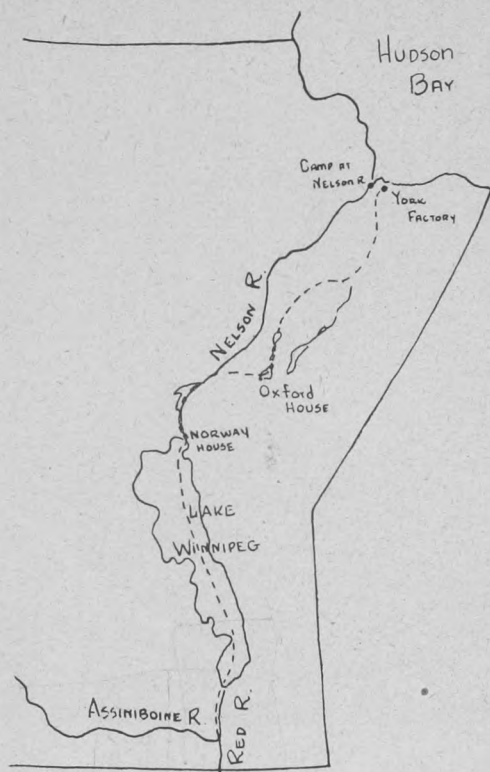
"The berries are plentiful, too. They are a welcome change to our meals of meat, fish and bannock. Some of the berries are like those at home. We find strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries and blueberries."

"There is a berry, new to us, which is called the saskatoon. It is a dark bluish purple, the shape of a blueberry, and grows on bushes. Some of these bushes grow almost as tall as trees. These berries are very good to eat. We pull them from the bushes and eat them a handful at a time. How blue our lips and tongues get! I hope they grow along the Red River. I am sure Mother could make good use of them."

"We are to rest here at Oxford House for a few days before carrying everything overland to the Nelson River. Our next stop will be at Norway House. Captain Macdonell says the trip will be easier

August 10—Norway House—

"The hardest part is over. We shall travel up Lake Winnipeg. Everyone says the lake is too shallow to have a current. We are all light-hearted and feel that we shall soon be in our new homes.



MANITOBA

They are much larger and lighter in color than our elk at home. What beautiful antlers they have!"

August 30, 1812—

"We have landed."

"Captain Macdonell says we will make our homes here on this point of land formed by a sharp bend of the River."

"We have called it Point Douglas in honour of Lord Selkirk. His full name is Thomas Douglas, Lord Selkirk."

"What a welcome we had! We were just beginning to unload the boats when we heard yelling and screaming and the beat of many hoofs. We grabbed our guns and formed a circle about our boats and goods.

"Jim O'Grady had a nasty accident. He fell with a load on the last portage and sprained his left arm badly. We were bathing it with water when one of the Indian women came and hustled us off. She made a poultice of Indian tobacco and bound it on. Within an hour Jim's arm was much more comfortable. This tobacco is made from the red willow. I must find out how to make it."

August 26—

"We are camped at the mouth of the Red River. The water of the river and lake is murky and shallow. We are in a different country now."

"For the last few days the trees have thinned out and we see large stretches of rolling hills covered with green grass. The shore of the lake is boggy."

"Tonight a large herd of elk came down to the river to drink.



ELK

Around the bend of the river came a party of Indians at full gallop. They wore feathers on their heads and very little clothing. Their bodies were streaked with paint of all colors. They stopped a short distance from us. We found they were a party of Metis or half-breeds sent from Fort Gibraltar to tell us we are not wanted here and to order us to pack up our things and go back home."

"Captain Macdonell was very indignant. "Tell your masters that we have come to stay. I shall call at Fort Gibraltar to-morrow."

"I hope there will be no trouble. The traders at Fort Gibraltar belong to the North West Company. Lord Selkirk is a member of the Hudson's Bay Company and has bought this land. Each Company wants to drive the other out of the land."

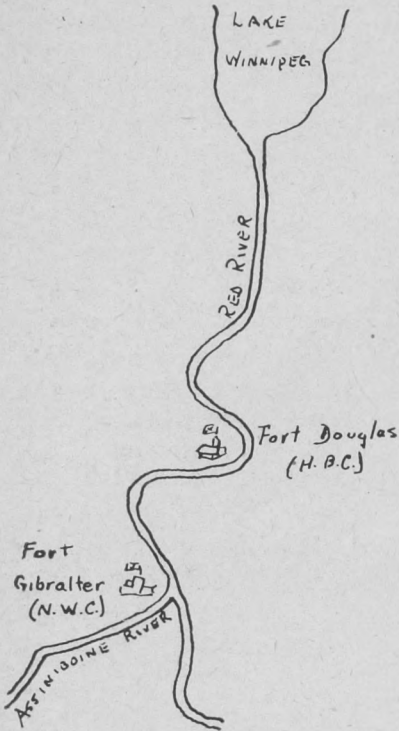


BUFFALO

PIERRE VISITS THE SETTLERS

We have just read in Uncle John's diary about the settlers' landing at Point Douglas.

On this map you will see Fort Gibraltar. That is the fort belonging to the North West Company. About ten miles down stream is a large bend in the river. The settlers had chosen that bend for their settlement and called it Point Douglas. The Metis, who were part Indian and part French, were settled about Fort Gibraltar.



The North West Company had tried to frighten the settlers away, but Captain Macdonell had made it clear that they had come to stay.

Pierre Laroc rode up to Fort Gibraltar one morning. He tied his horse to the fence and strode into the trading post. When John MacKay came to the door, Pierre said, "Hello, John, where is everyone?"

John was surprised. "Haven't you heard? Lord Selkirk's settlers came a week ago."

Pierre had not heard and wanted to know where they were.

"You know that big bend in the river about ten miles downstream? They have put their tents up there."

"What is Mr. Cameron, our factor at the North West Company, going to do about it?" Pierre wanted to know.

John shook his head. "I don't know. He sent word for the settlers to go back home, but they won't go. Captain Macdonell, their leader, asked Mr. Cameron and the men to come to the settlement to-day. They have just gone beyond that group of trees on the river."

"We do not want these settlers here. They will drive the animals away. You know the Indians must go where the animals are and we shall lose their trade. When Mr. Cameron returns, we will hear what happened."

Pierre bought some shot for his gun and went out. He stood for a moment looking at the river and then walked to his horse. He would go to see these settlers, too.

As Pierre rode round the bend he could hear the bagpipes playing. There before him was a picture he would never forget.

The settlers' tents were pitched back from the river. The men were all lined up in front. Flags were flying and to one side were four small cannon.

But let us listen to Pierre's story as he told it to some late comers at the North West Company fort that evening.

"Mr. Cameron was just stepping out of his boat as I rode up," he said.

"Captain Macdonell shook hands with him and together they walked up to the settlers. All the men got out of the boats and followed. Macdonell then went and stood with his settlers. One of the Hudson's Bay Company men took out a white paper. He opened it and told everyone it was a message from the king.

"I moved closer to hear what the Great White Father had to say. The king's message said that this land had been bought by Lord Selkirk from the Hudson's Bay Company. Lord Selkirk was to bring out settlers to live here. Captain Miles Macdonell would be their governor.

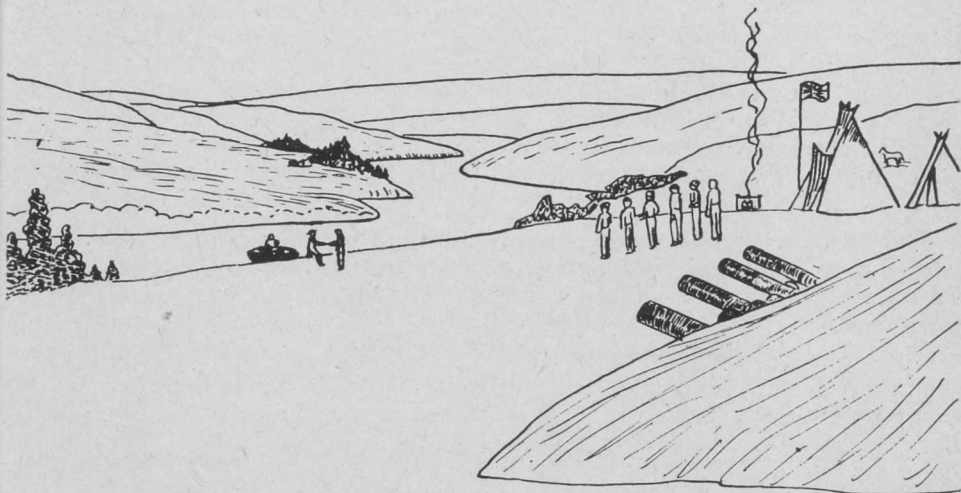
"Then Captain Macdonell saluted. He shook hands with the Hudson's Bay man and then with Mr. Cameron. They all stood very straight while the bagpipes played 'God Save the King'.

"Some of the men went over to the cannon and fired them in salute.

"I wondered what we were going to do. If the Great White Father gave this land to these settlers we should not try to drive them away. I watched Mr. Cameron and his men. None of them made the sign of the cross to show that they agreed to let the settlers stay. So I didn't either.

"Then Captain Macdonell told us that he would like us to have dinner with them. We went towards the nearest tent. What a dinner we had there! How we all ate!

"We were all very friendly, but I am still not sure what our Company will do about the settlers."



RIVER BANK AND GUNS

STARTING OVER AGAIN

Captain Miles Macdonell was taken prisoner by the North West Company and sent to Montreal. Then the North West Company tried to drive out the settlers. Let us read about it in an account which could have been written by Colin Robinson, the man who was sent by Lord Selkirk to be in charge of the settlement.

April 2, 1815—

"To-day I met Lord Selkirk in Montreal. He is very worried about his settlers in the Red River Valley. He has heard the North Westers are rejoicing that they have got rid of the settlers for good this time. He wants me to go west to see what has happened. I am starting in the morning."

May 27—

"Arrived at Fort Douglas! Not a settler in sight! The smithy and a big warehouse are all that is left. Every house and every barn has been burned."

"The Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Douglas tells me the settlers are at Norway House at the end of Lake Winnipeg. I shall have to follow them there."

June 9—Norway House—

"I thought I would never persuade the settlers to return with me to the Red River Valley. They were going to stay at Norway House. They had no hope of ever making homes in the valley. Poor souls! No wonder they are unhappy. I wish we could make the traders of the North West Company leave them alone."

"I told the settlers that more people and a new governor, Lord Semple, were on their way to the Red River Valley. This was good news to them. They have finally decided to go back once again and we leave in the morning."

June 30—Point Douglas—

"When we arrived at Fort Douglas the settlers were so happy to see grain growing in their fields. The men from the Hudson's Bay post had planted it for them. Now begins the task of building new homes."

October 1, 1815—

"We have been back at Point Douglas for three months now. The settlers seem to be in good spirits. Their houses are coming along well. They will be finished before winter. The grain is cut and threshed. What a crop! Fifteen hundred bushels! This is wonderful soil and the settlers would do well if left to themselves. Lord Semple and ninety more settlers arrived last night. We were glad to see them."

"I am sorry the North West Company men are so unfriendly toward our settlers. They talk to the Metis, those who are part white and part Indian, against the settlers. I'm afraid the Metis may try to harm them. I have warned Lord Semple that he must watch for trouble. He thinks he will be able to handle anything that may happen. He is a fine man and I believe he will be able to do so. I am going back to Montreal to tell Lord Selkirk about my trip."

LORD SELKIRK VISITS THE COLONY

I

Still the North West Company would give the settlers no peace. They drove them out and burned their buildings several times. We hear of one trying time from Lord Selkirk himself. This is what he had to say:

"I have just heard that there is more trouble in the Red River Valley. How I wish I were there to see what happened! The North West Company has attacked my settlement again. Oh, for an army of good Scottish Highlanders! I'd show those North West traders who owns the land in the valley."

"My poor settlers! Will they ever be allowed to live in peace? It is five years since the first group left Scotland and I have just heard that they have been driven from my valley again."

"It seems that the North West Company has persuaded the Metis to turn against the settlers, too. Lord Semple could not have known just how strongly the North West Company hates our being here. How can men treat other people so cruelly! What can they gain by driving out a small group of settlers?"



"A short time ago a party of Metis led by the men of the North West Company rode towards the settlement. Lord Semple with a few of his men rode out to meet them. He must have thought that that he could explain about the land being bought from the Hudson's Bay Company and all would be well. How can you talk to such savages!"

"The two parties met on a hill where a small grove of oak trees were growing. I am told that one of the Metis rode forward and shook his gun in Lord Semple's face. The Metis screamed, "What are you doing here?" Lord Semple quietly asked, "And what are **you** doing here?" He tried to take the gun as the savage swung it around. What a brave, fearless act! A shot was fired. Whether it was an accident or not, we shall never know. Both sides began to shoot. The battle was short but fierce. When it was over, my poor Lord Semple and twenty-two of his men lay dead."

"Excited by their victory the Metis drove the settlers away and burned their homes. Once more my people have gone north to Norway House."

"The men of the North West Company are boasting about winning the Battle of Seven Oaks."

"The government here at Montreal will do nothing about it. I have gathered men to go west to protect my settlers. Two hundred disbanded soldiers are ready to go with me."

"It is getting too late in the year to travel, but we will go as far as we can before the snow falls."



TRAVELLING BY CANOE

II

SPRING AT THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT

"It was a long, hard trip. We spent the winter at Fort William. We took the fort from the North West Company and sent that rascal of a Factor to Montreal for trial. We will show him that he can't go about shooting honest settlers."

"The settlers were back in the Red River Valley when I got here. How beautiful the valley is! I know the settlers could be happy here if they were only left to themselves. They have little heart to begin again. I've tried to encourage them. I asked the soldiers if they would like to stay and have farms of their own. Most of them want to stay. I have given them farms across the river from Fort Douglas.

The settlers seemed more hopeful when they knew that the soldiers were going to stay."



LOG CABIN

to come to them from Scotland. They need a school too."

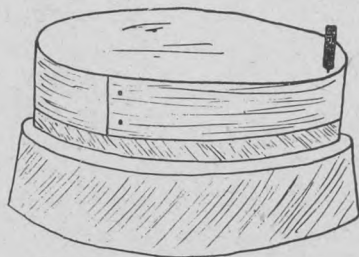
"Yesterday I watched the women grinding grain with their stone mills. They are called querns. Do you see the little hole in the top stone? The grain is poured in there. It goes down between the two stones. The top stone is turned around and around on the bottom stone. In this way the grain is crushed and ground into meal."

III

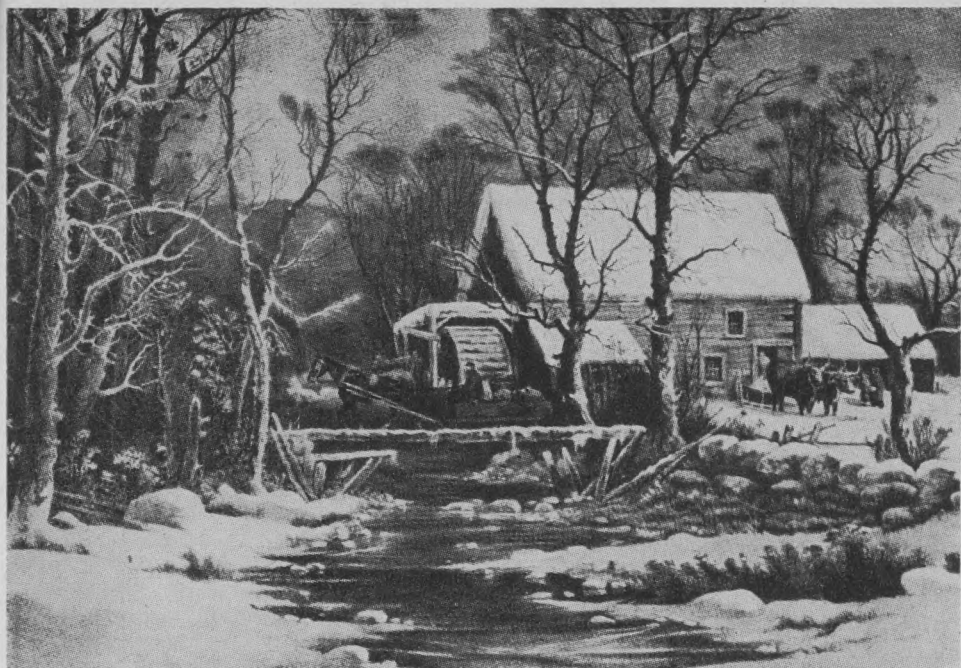
SUMMER IS HERE

"All the crops have been planted. I must help them to improve the place. We must have some bridges. The men have been cutting trees for their homes and barns."

"We have picked a spot for a church and called it Kildonan. I must see if I can get a minister



A QUERN



MILL

"George MacLeod and I walked up the river to see if we could put a mill in here. His father owns a mill in Scotland. He thinks it could easily be done. I shall send out a mill as soon as possible."

"The Indians are fine people! I love to go to their homes to visit them. They have invited me to listen to their meetings."

"The Indians have made me a chief. They call me the 'Silver Chief.' I didn't think my white hair would be so important. It at least has given me a name."



SELECTING THE SITE FOR THE KILDONAN CHURCH



INDIAN CHIEFTAIN

"I had been here only a short time when the chief told me that the land was his. I told him that I had bought it from the Hudson's Bay Company. He said that the Hudson's Bay Company could not sell what was not theirs. Here was a problem! I offered to buy it from him and we made a treaty. The settlers are to keep a strip of land on either side of the river as wide as the distance a white horse can be seen. I am to send each tribe of Indians one hundred pounds of good tobacco."

"I have spent four months with my settlers. They seem much happier. I feel that things will be better now. The North West Company are still grumbling, but will hardly attack with the soldiers here."

"Now I must go back east to be at the first trial of that rascal I arrested at Fort William."

I, Lord Selkirk, agree to
pay to each of the five
Indian chiefs one hundred pounds
of tobacco for which I will
receive for my Red River
Settlers the land on both
sides of the Red River as
far as we can see a white
horse

Lord Selkirk



WINTER AT FORT DAER ON THE PEMBINA RIVER

Mrs. MacKay, one of the first white women of the Red River settlement, writes to a friend back in Scotland about her adventures in Canada. Let us look into one of her letters to find out what she has to tell about her life in the new land.

Fort Daer,
Oct. 1, 1814.

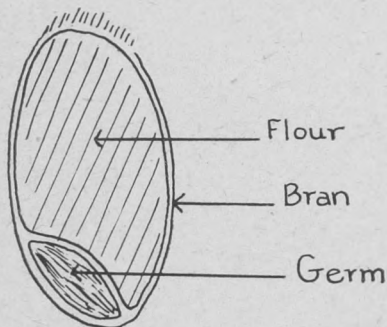
Dear Jean:

I have been at the Red River two years now. We are packing again. I am a little tired of it. We are to be shortly on our way to Fort Daer. This will be my third winter there. This map will show you where the Red River settlement is and the trail we follow to Fort Daer.

You see the frost took our wheat again this year, so we must go back down to the Pembina River for the winter. There are many buffalo at Fort Daer on the Pembina, and we are always sure of enough to eat.

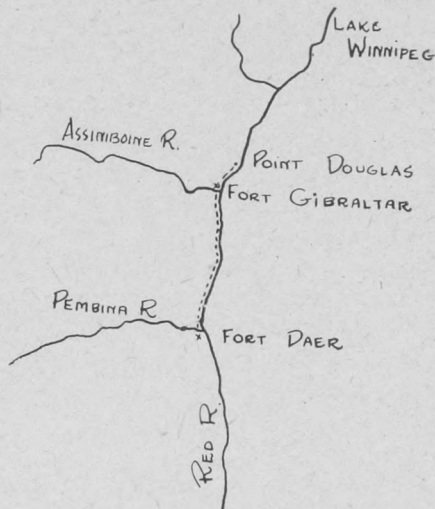
Poor John! I was so sorry for him. His crop was all frozen. He wished we could get a grain that would ripen a little earlier. I asked him why we couldn't use this grain for meal even if it is dark and shrivelled, but he said it would make us ill if we ate much of it. When I wanted to know why we could not plant it for feed, he drew a picture.

It seems that the new plant grows from a part of the seed called the germ. If this little germ is frozen, a new plant will not grow. We have to save our good seed, which Lord Selkirk gave us, for the next year.



the rest of us have to walk and carry our things with us. It is a long tramp of over seventy miles. We camp along the way. We will spend the winter in comfortable log houses at Fort Daer which we have built in other years.

You will be wondering how we spend our time during the winter. The men are kept busy cutting wood and hunting the buffalo. We are so grateful to the Indians for teaching them how to do these things.



So there is nothing to do but go to Fort Daer again. We have to be near the herds of buffalo that winter in the hills near the Pembina River. The snow blows off the hilltops there, so it is much easier for the buffalo to find grass.

The Indians all go to Fort Daer, too. They are very kind. They carry the small children on their horses but

We women are learning how to make moccasins and clothing from the skins. The Indian women enjoy helping us. They laughed at our first attempts, but patiently show us again.

We have also learned how to make pemmican. It is a food which we make in this way. We cut the buffalo meat in thin slices and dry it in the sun. Then we dry it slowly over the fire until it is as hard as flint. These slices are placed on skins and pounded until they are broken into slivers and chips. The broken up meat is mixed with dried berries and melted fat. The mixture is packed into sacks made of buffalo skins. We will make pemmican at Fort Daer this winter and use it next summer when we move back to the Red River.

Now, I must run to the wharf with this letter. The boat will soon be leaving for York Factory.

Your loving friend,

Susan MacKay.

GETTING SETTLED IN THE RED RIVER VALLEY

The Scottish people had always been used to hard times and for several years things did not improve for them at Red River.

They were lonely. They had left their friends in Scotland and had no hope of ever seeing them again. Of course they made new friends, but they missed their old ones. The Scottish people loved their land. They had found it very hard to give up their homes in Scotland.

This new country was so different. The low, rolling hills along the slow stream made good farming land, but they longed for the high, rugged hills covered with purple heather.

Although the settlers missed the heather and other Scottish flowers, there were many new ones in the Red River district to delight them and make the children happy. The crocuses pushed their furry noses through the ground early in April each year. A little later their purple blooms could be seen all over the open spaces of the valley. The children loved to pick the little blue violets that grew in the poplar groves and at the edge of the wayside. They usually found the first blooms of the pink wild roses before the middle of June.

The farmers liked the buffalo bean plant with its light green leaves and sweet smelling yellow flowers. They thought that it and the pretty blue vetch, which blossomed later on in July, made good feed for cattle. The dainty harebells, so like the bluebells of Scotland, warmed the hearts of these Scottish settlers. They reminded them of home.

It was not always easy to get enough to eat. Sometimes the grain was frozen and the settlers had to leave their homes and go to live at Fort Daer on the Pembina River. They had to be near the herds of buffalo that spent the winter there.

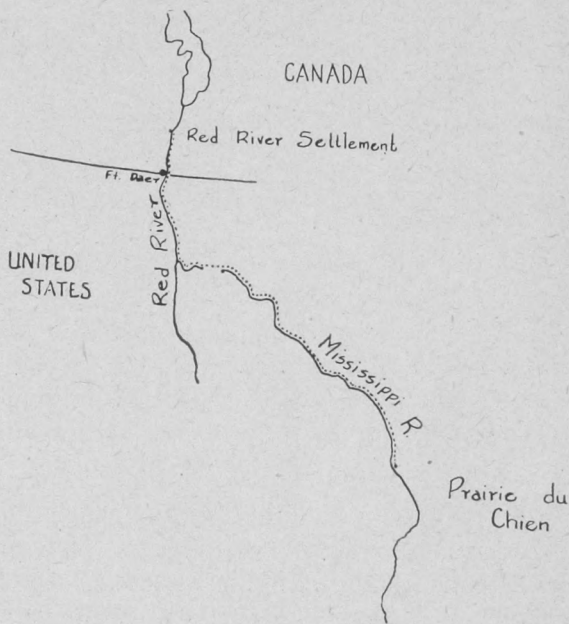
For three years grasshoppers ate all their crops. They came in millions that darkened the sky like a black cloud. They settled on the fields and gardens and ate everything green. Only a few potatoes were left for the settlers. These grasshoppers laid their eggs in the soil. The following year the eggs hatched and the young grasshoppers ate everything as it grew.

Instead of planting all their seed in the spring, the farmers always saved enough grain each year for seed to plant the following year. After three years of grasshoppers there was no seed left. The settlers knew that there was grain in the United States. A group of men, while it was still winter, fastened on their snowshoes and started for the south. They bought grain at Prairie du Chien, 700 miles to the south, and brought it back in flat-bottomed boats up the Mississippi River. They carried the boats over land to the Red River and came downstream to Fort Douglas.

The weather in the Red River Valley did not make it any easier.

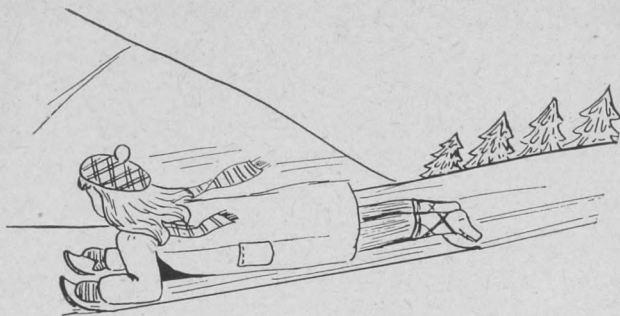
These early Scottish families were not used to the burning heat from the clear summer skies, nor did they enjoy the terrific thunder storms with lashing rain and driving wind.

They did not like the long winters. The most disliked of all storms were the blizzards. The wind came from the north-west and blew fiercely. These north-west winds, which were thick with falling snow, swept up great gusts of snow from the ground. The people were lucky, if they reached home before the blizzard struck. These storms usually lasted for three days. Sometimes it was impossible to go from the house to the barn during that time. When the blizzard finally ended, the work of digging paths to the barn, the well and the woodpile had to begin. Often the snow drifts were from ten to twenty feet deep.



BLIZZARD.

The farmers felt down-hearted when they saw that the prairie grass was buried deeply under the snow. It meant that they would have to



CHILD ON SLEIGH.

keep their cattle under shelter and feed them during several months of the year. However, the children loved to play in the deep snow. It was fun whizzing down the slopes on their home-made sleds and toboggans.

After one very long winter, with a great deal of snow, the spring came quickly. The snow melted and filled the river banks with water. Then it spread out over the land for miles. Taking what they could carry and driving their cattle before them, the settlers were forced to go to the higher hills until the water went down.

When they did get back to their farms, most of the houses had floated down the river. But these brave people did not give up. This land was theirs. They had come to love it. They were not going to let the river take it from them. They were going to make their homes on it. So they started over again. Like King Bruce and the spider, after many tries they did succeed. They built better homes and were able to get more pleasure out of life in the Red River Valley.

The tiny settlement grew and spread along the river bank. The Hudson's Bay Company opened a trading post on Point Douglas and called it Fort Douglas. Every summer the fur brigades came in from the west to trade. Later the Hudson's Bay Company left Fort Douglas and built a larger fort farther upstream called Fort Garry. The Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company joined as one company. After that no one tried to drive the settlers from their homes. More people came to live in the settlement. Better homes were made. Schools and churches were built. The farmers sharpened their plow shares at the local blacksmith's shop. Much better flour was made at the big grist mill on the banks of the river. Stores opened in which the people bought the things they had done without for so long. Let us now read some stories of the way they lived in the Red River Settlement.

Grandmother's Stories About Red River Days

Grandmother McDermott, rocking slowly back and forth in her little walnut rocking chair looked out of the window of the old house down on the river road and out to the winding Red River beyond.

She never tired of this lovely view, for it brought back memories of her long life in the Red River Settlement. True, today it is called Winnipeg, but to her it would always be Kildonan, the Scottish Settlement of the Red River.

How the children loved Grandmother's stories of the "olden days". They would soon be home from school. Grandmother's dim, old eyes brightened at the thought. She loved her little grandchildren dearly, and nothing pleased her more than to be able to tell them a story of early Red River days.

Friday night was the favorite story-telling time. The children would gather around Grandmother, seated in the old walnut rocking chair, and listen eagerly to her tales of long ago.

I am sure you children would like Grandmother's stories, too, so here they are for you to read, just as she told them to her own little grandchildren.

A Busy Day in Old Kildonan

When I was a young girl, I lived with my parents in the Scotch settlement, Kildonan, which was part of the Red River settlement. We lived in a large log house facing the river, just about a mile from where we live today. You children have often been down in that part of Winnipeg. When I was young, it was just open prairie country with a few log houses here and there, a school, a flour mill, the Gray Nuns' Home, the churches and the Hudson's Bay Fort.

Life was not as easy as it is now. The men always had so much work to do, that we had to take over part of it or it would never have been done.

I remember one morning the men were going for logs. Mother, Mary, my oldest sister, and I were up at 2 a.m. to cook their breakfast. We gave them a big meal of fried eggs, beefsteak, pork, cheese, bannock, butter and tea. Then we packed them a hearty lunch, together with camp kettles, dry socks and moccasins, buffalo robes and blankets.

Seven sleighs, drawn by oxen, left Kildonan that morning to get logs to build our Presbyterian church.

After they had left we sat down and ate our breakfast. Mother did the dishes while Mary and I went out to the milk house. It was a little building with a straw roof and a deep cellar. It was cold in there, but the root fire in the little Carron stove had kept the milk from freezing.

The milk had been left standing over night in the milk coolers. They were wooden pans made of oak. We skimmed the cream from the milk. We put the cream into the churn and the skim milk into two big buckets. Then we washed the coolers, first with cold water, and then with warm water. We scrubbed them hard with a willow brush. Lastly, we rinsed them with boiling water.

After we had finished washing the coolers, we went to the barn. We fed and milked the four cows. Then we carried the milk to the milk house, strained it into the coolers, and left it there till evening.

By the time we got back to the house, Mother had got the smaller children up and had given them their breakfast. My two little brothers then went out to finish the chores around the barn, while Mary and I sat down for a few minutes' rest.

It wasn't for long, though, as it was nearly school time, and we had to get the children ready. We didn't want them to be late for their lessons. Mary and I had finished school the year before. I'll tell you about our school days in another story.

Well, you can see how busy we were—washing, cleaning, cooking and sewing. We didn't have the things to work with that your mother has today. We had no sewing machine nor washing machine. We did not even have a cook stove! Mother did all the cooking over a big, open fireplace, and she baked the bread in the large mud oven outside.

The little children, and even Mary and I, liked "bake day" especially well. Fresh bread was a treat. Then we always had a special treat. Mother would brown some flour, mix it with molasses, and call it candy. How good it tasted!

About five o'clock we were all looking for the men. Soon one of the little boys spied the first sleigh coming down the bank on the opposite side of the river. Then the next sleigh appeared, and the next, until the whole seven were in sight. The oxen and the men were plodding wearily along. Their breath and the steam from the oxen's broad backs rose in white clouds around them. The sleighs were piled high with long, straight logs.

Mother, Mary and I quickly put away our sewing. The two little boys ran out to help their father and big brothers. The younger children skipped about in their excitement, getting in everyone's way.

Father and the boys were tired and cold. As they walked over to the fireplace to get warm, Mother noticed that Jim's nose and cheek showed white beside the rest of his rosy face.

"Come away from that fire, Jim," she cried. "You have frozen your nose and cheek. It will be very sore if you get close to the heat before we get the frost out of it."

Jim touched his nose and cheek.

"I guess they are frozen," he said. "I can't feel them at all."

While Jim and Mother had been talking, one of the little boys had gone outside for a handful of snow. Even the little children knew what to do for frost bite.

"Here, Jim," he said, holding out the snow, "rub it on the white places. Rub real hard."

"Let me do it," said Mary. "I don't want him to rub too hard. He might rub off the skin and that would never do."

Mary gently rubbed the frozen places with the snow until the color came back.

"I can feel it stinging now," said Jim.

"Good," said Mother, "the frost is out. Now, Mary, just rub on a little goose grease, and he'll never know he had a frost bite."

As soon as supper was ready, Mother called us all to the table. We all had a big meal of roast beef, with plenty of fresh bread, strong tea for the grown-ups, and milk for the children. Father and the boys felt rested and ready to talk about the trip.

The boys were very proud of themselves, and well they might be, for they had killed a huge timber wolf.

While the men were chopping down the trees, the two boys had looked after the oxen. They thought they had heard the pad-pad of feet near them, and looking up they saw the huge, gray shadow not thirty feet from them. Quick as a flash, Jim, the elder, seized the rifle, tipped a little powder into the muzzle, wet the ball with his tongue, and shoved it into place. There was a flash and a bang! With a howl of pain, the wolf bounded into the bush, leaving a trail of blood behind. Quickly re-loading the gun, the two boys plunged into the bush after the animal. "There he is," the younger boy cried. Sure enough, after one leap, the wolf had fallen over dead.



SHOOTING A WOLF.

After hearing this story, the younger children wanted to go out to see the wolf, which the boys had brought home on top of a pile of logs, but Father said, "No, not tonight."

When we had finished supper and done the dishes, it was time for evening prayers and a hymn. As Father was tired, the prayer was short. So was the hymn. In a few minutes we were all in bed, sound asleep.

Dear me! That is where you children should be too. How quickly time flies when I tell you the old Red River stories!

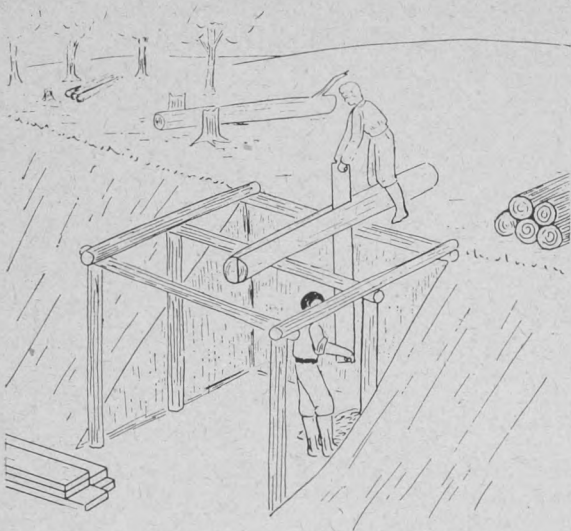
The Kildonan Church

For a long time my father and some of the other Scotch settlers of the Red River had been wanting to build a Presbyterian church. We went to the Anglican church and we were always very welcome there. The Anglican minister was as kind and friendly to us as he was to his own people. Still, it was not the same as having our own Presbyterian church and our own Presbyterian minister.

It seemed that each time the men were about to build the church, something happened. Once it was the flood. Even now I hate to think of it—the swirling, muddy water of the Red River carrying away our homes, our cattle and the seed grain. Another time it was the grasshoppers. There were so many of them that they blackened the sky as they swept over the settlement. They ate the grass, the wheat, and the green vegetables. They left nothing except a few potatoes and carrots. The flood and the grasshoppers made us so poor that we had to work very hard. There was neither time nor money now to build the church.

We had not forgotten it though, and three winters later the building of the Kildonan church was begun. Very early, every morning for weeks the Kildonan ox teams went backward and forward dragging big sleighs loaded with stone from Stony Mountain and pine logs from St. Peter's. Both places were many miles away.

The logs were sawed by hand in a saw-pit close to the place where the church was to be built. One man at the upper end of the saw and the other in the bottom of the pit at the lower end of the saw, did the work. Slow, tire-some work it was, too.



SAW-PIT.

I remember once, when Jim was helping, he got some sawdust in his eye. When he got home that night, his eye was painfully sore and red. He had been rubbing it although he should have known better. Mother tried to look into his eye, but she couldn't see very well by candlelight.

“Bathe it gently with warm water, Jim,” she said, “and when you go to bed, put this poultice on it. It is just a little bag full of cold, wet tea leaves. It will ease the pain and it may draw out the saw-dust. If it does not, I'll try to get it out in the morning when it is daylight.”

In the morning Jim's eye did not look so red and swollen, but he could still feel something in it. “Come over to the window, Jim. Face the light. Now, do you think it is under the upper or lower lid?”

“It feels as if it is under the upper lid, Mother.”

“Sit down on this chair, Jim. Now be very still, while I take hold of your eyelashes. I'm just pulling the eyelid back gently and turning it back over this smooth stick. Now I can see the speck. I'll brush it out with the corner of my clean handkerchief, let the eyelid back, and there, it's all over.”

Jim blinked his eye a few times to make sure the speck of saw-dust was gone.

“Thank you very much, Mother. It feels fine again now. I'll be more careful today at the saw-pit. I'll not look up when the wind blows the saw-dust about.”

The work of building the church went on all through the next summer. The sounds of the axe, the saw, and the hammer were music to our hearts, for we knew that soon we would have our own Presbyterian church.

When the building was finished, we, the people of Kildonan, were proud of ourselves and thankful to God that we not only had a beautiful church, but also a lovely little house for the minister.

The two buildings had cost four thousand dollars. They were both paid for, because everybody in Kildonan had given either money or work, and many had given both.

Perhaps you would like me to tell you about the church itself, as it was when I was a young girl.

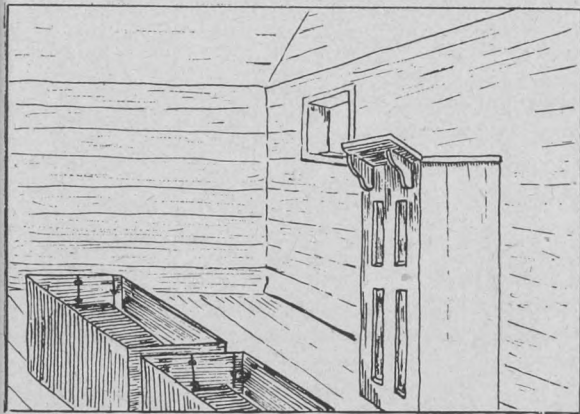
It was a large stone building, just as you see it today. The walls, as you know, are two or three feet thick, and very solid. Near the front were two high pulpits. A pulpit is a high box with a little shelf on top. The minister stands in it. Then he can look down at the people and speak directly to them. He puts his Bible on top of the shelf. One pulpit was for our minister, Dr. Black. The other was for Mr. Fraser, the choir master.



CHURCH.

On each side of the minister's pulpit were several big, square box pews. The first one was the Hudson's Bay Company pew. Once I remember seeing Sir George Simpson sitting there when he was visiting our settlement. He was the governor of the Company—a very important

man. Dr. Black's family sat in another of the box pews. I forget who owned the others, except for the Bannerman one. Mr. Bannerman had four very beautiful daughters. I'm afraid that often, when I should have been listening to Dr. Black, I was staring at the Bannerman young ladies. I used to wish that I were a little older, so that I could wear my hair in curls and rolls like theirs. I thought that it would be wonderful to wear hoop skirts and go swishing down the aisle.



PULPIT AND BOX PEW.

There were other smaller pews, stretching to the back of the church, for the rest of the people.

There was no organ in those days, but there was a very good choir. Mr. Fraser, the choir leader, would stand in his pulpit, blow a note on his pitch pipe, and then the singing would begin.

The church was heated by three little stoves brought from Scotland. At first there were only two stoves, and then the stone building used to be quite cold on wintry days. The pipes ran the full length of the church. A little kettle hung from each joint in the pipes to catch the sooty drip.



YOUNG LADY.

The church is old now. It was built with such loving care. Look at it from the window and then look at this little picture of it in my album. It has hardly changed at all.

Miss Davis' School

It was the custom for the sons and daughters of the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company to go to school in England. Some of the young people from the Red River settlement went there too. It was very costly to have to go so far away for an education. As a rule the children went to the little Red River school for a few years. Then their school education was over.

After a while the Anglican Church began "St. John's School for Boys," but there was still no high school for girls. Then the two Davis sisters returned from school in England. They decided that a young ladies' school for the Red River settlement was needed.

But I was going to tell you about my school days at Miss Davis' school. Would you like me to begin?

My sister Mary and I, together with thirty-three more girls, lived in the big stone house which was known as "Miss Davis' school." Miss Davis, her sister Nancy, and the housekeeper, Sarah, lived there, too. What jolly times we girls had!



MISS DAVIS' SCHOOL.

On Sundays we went to church, walking in groups of four. We all sat in one part of the church with Miss Davis watching us to see that we remembered our manners.

On cold, wintry mornings, Miss Davis would come to the dormitory doors in her dressing gown and night cap with a flickering candle in her hand. She would call, "Are you up, young ladies?"

Of course, most of us had heard the "get-up" bell, but we always stayed in bed till Miss Davis called us. Then what a rush and scramble there was, hunting for clothes in the dark and bumping into sleepy-eyed friends.

How cold it was some mornings, too! We were glad of the big buffalo robes spread on the floors. They were warm to bare feet. We dressed quickly, for the room was so cold that we could see our breath. The windows were frosted half an inch thick.

Do you know why you can see your breath on a cold day, or in a cold room, or why the steam rose from the oxen's sides when they were bringing home the loads of logs in the winter time? You don't! Well, I'll tell you right now, and we'll go back to Miss Davis' school in just a minute or two.

There are always little drops of water in your breath. We cannot see them on a warm day because they are so fine and far apart. But on a cold day, or in a little cold room, the air is heavier. It pushes the fine little drops together to make larger drops. We can see these larger drops forming as fog or mist when we breathe on a cold day.

I might tell you too, that there are little drops of water in all the air about us. In a cold room, as in Miss Davis' place, these little drops grow bigger and bigger. They form the white frost on the windows.

Sarah and Nancy always had breakfast ready for us by the time we got downstairs. I remember one morning, though, when breakfast was late. Poor Sarah, who always had to get up at 4 a.m., had fallen asleep milking the cow!

For breakfast we always had potatoes mashed with milk, bread and butter, and tea with milk but no sugar.

After breakfast prayers were said. Miss Davis read us a chapter from the Bible. Then we went into the school room.

Miss Davis was a good teacher. She was strict but kind. People said that you could always tell if a girl had gone to Miss Davis' school because she sat down as though she had a basket of eggs on her head. Miss Davis was always reminding us of our manners and of the proper way of walking and sitting. She wanted us to be "real ladies."

We were taught reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic and music. Miss Davis was very fussy about spelling. I've often had to write a word a hundred times for having spelled it incorrectly in the test.

She taught us other things, too. I remember that one day she was telling us that the world was round like an orange. Then she had to stop to tell us what an orange was, because none of us had ever seen one.

On sunny afternoons we used to go for long walks along the river banks. Some afternoons we used to sit under the big oak trees sewing and darning, reading and talking to one another.

In the winter, when the days were short, supper would be served early. We often had roast beef, or fresh fish, such as perch, goldeye, or sturgeon, or perhaps just pemmican hash. After supper we would gather in the big living room. Miss Davis would light the candles and the two fish oil lamps. When we would listen to one of our girls, Lydia Christie, sing our favorite songs. We all joined in the choruses. Two of the songs we liked were "Money Musk" and "Settlers' Joy". Often too, we danced reels, the Scottish hornpipe, and the Red River jig until at last Miss Davis would say, "That's enough for tonight, girls. Off to bed now. Good night. God bless you." And off we would go up the winding maple stairway to our chilly rooms, to sleep and to dream of happy school days.



KETTLE.

On my way to Rainy River

From a French Canadian folk-song

Solo

1 Rid....ing a...long my way to Rain..y

Riv....er, Rid....ing a..long my way to Rain..y

Riv....er, There I have met three

love...ly girls to..geth...er. A...long the

road with a song we are — go.....ing —

A...long the road we are march.ing strong.

- 2 There I have met three lovely girls together. (*bis*)
I didn't chose, mine was fair Arabella.
- 3 There I placed her behind me on the saddle.
- 4 A hundred leagues I held her fast a riding.
- 5 She wouldn't speak, nor with me be abiding.
- 6 Then she said, "Stop! Oh, let me go a drinking!"
- 7 I brought the belle to the edge of the river.
- 8 All she would do was turn away and shiver.
- 9 Then I took her to the home of her father.
- 10 She drank a lot, it was not any bother.
- 11 Her parent's health first she would be a toasting.
- 12 Brothers, sisters, of them she was a boasting,
- 13 Of me the lad, who'd brought her home so safely.



Remember the Red River

*Recorded by Mrs. Georgie Gammie
Calgary, Alberta*

1 'Tis a long time from you I've been waiting
for the words you nev.....er would say, But, to-
day, my last hope it has vanished,
For they tell me you are go....ing a..way.

2 From our plains I knew that you'd be going.
I shall miss your bright eyes, your smile.
Far from me you are taking the sunshine
That has made lovely my path for a while.

3 Often think of the Red River Valley.
Very sad and lonely I'll be.
Do remember the heart you are breaking.
Promise you will remain faithful to me.

4 When you sail far across the wide ocean,
May you treasure those bright hours
That we spent on the bank of the River,
In summer evenings 'mong prairie flowers!

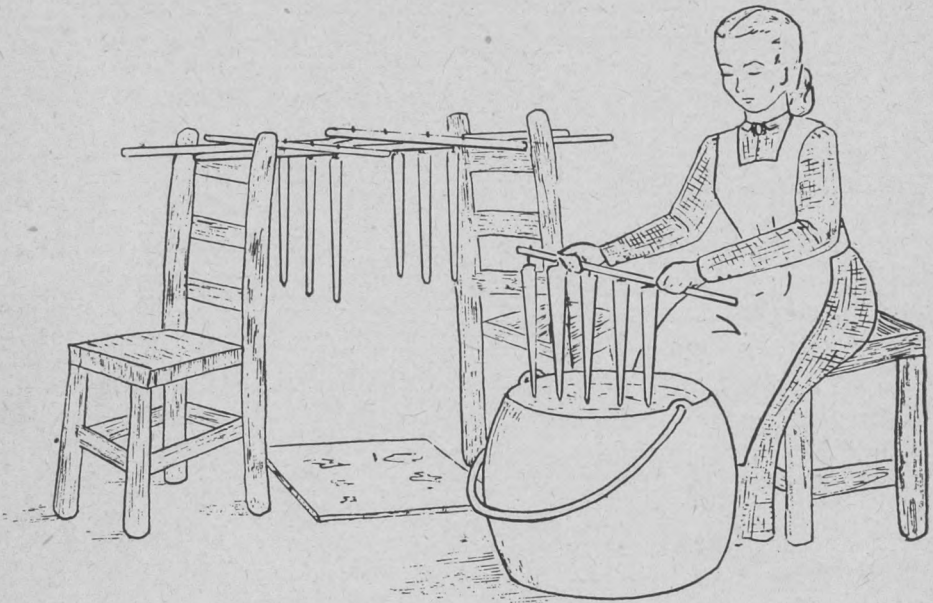
Making Candles

"We're going to make candles today, girls," my mother said to Mary and me one morning. "I've been saving the tallow all summer. We have about four pounds of beeswax, too, that the boys got from the bee-tree they found near the river. In another month winter will be here. We'll need lots of candles then, as it gets dark so early.

While Mother was talking, Mary had run to get the big iron pot. She hung it on the crane over the fireplace. A crane, you know, was an iron rod fastened to the back of the fireplace. One could swing it over the fire and hang pots and kettles on it.

"Put the beeswax in first, Mary," called Mother. "We'll make the wax candles now."

I got the short poles that we used when making candles. I tied five strings, or wicks as we called them, to each pole. Then I placed two larger poles across the backs of two chairs.



MAKING CANDLES.

"Help me carry the kettle over to the chairs, please," said Mary.

I took one side of the handle and Mary the other. We carried the heavy pot of melted wax and set it down in front of Mother.

Then very, very carefully, with a hand that never shook, Mother dipped one row of wicks into the wax. She slowly drew them out. Each string was coated with wax. She laid the little pole on the rack formed by the two long poles across the chair backs.

When all the wicks had been dipped in this way, she began again with the first set. Over and over again she dipped them, until at last she had fifteen perfect candles.

"Now, girls," said Mother, "pack them carefully into the candle box. Tie some more wicks to the poles. Will you make the next set of candles while I get dinner ready?"

Mary and I were pleased that Mother would trust us with the important work of making candles. We did our very best to make smooth, matched candles.

By noon we had finished the wax candles. After dinner we planned to make the tallow candles.

In the afternoon, when Mary and I were lifting the big pot of hot tallow over to the chairs, I slipped, the pot tipped, and oh! some of the hot grease poured over Mary's hand.

In spite of the pain, she did not let go of the handle, and we set the pot down without spilling any more.

Mary was a big girl, but she couldn't help crying as she held out her poor burned hand to Mother.

"O, Mother, Mother," I cried. "I didn't mean to burn Mary. I slipped and the pot tipped . . ." I couldn't say any more. My tears were falling as fast as Mary's now.

"Girls, girls," said Mother in her calm voice. "Stop crying. I know, dear, you didn't mean to burn your sister. Mary, sit down here and let me look at your hand. Dear me! It is quite a burn. Your wrist and all the back of your hand have been scalded. Some blisters are forming already."

After Mother had finished looking at the burns, she went over to the cupboard. She took down a tin of goose grease. She covered the burn with a layer of it.

"There now, Mary," she said. "That will keep out the air. Then it won't hurt so much. We'll put goose grease on it for several days. I may have to bandage it but I'd rather not. It will heal better this way. Be very, very careful not to bump your hand against anything. Turning to me she said. "You and I will have to finish the candles ourselves. Mary must lie down. I am going to make her a hot cup of tea. Perhaps she will have a little sleep. A bad burn is a shock to the whole body. She needs to be quiet and rest for a while." Indeed, Mary was quite white and trembling from the shock. She was only too glad to lie down.

Mother and I reheated the tallow and then went on with the candle making. By five o'clock Mary was awake and feeling much better, and we had made 155 candles.

An Indian Story

In the long winter evenings as our family sat around the fire, Mother and Father often told us stories, just as I am telling you the Red River tales. Our favorite stories were Indian stories. I thought you children might like to hear one that I was told when I was a little girl, so tonight I am going to tell you the old Indian legend "Why the Muskrat Has No Hair On Its Tail."

One day We-sa-ay-chak, the great Indian story teller, made camp beside the Red River. He was very tired and hungry. He had travelled many miles that day.

Quickly he built a small fire. He filled his kettle with water from the river. He hung it from a forked stick over the flames. Then he took out his hunting knife and a lump of pemmican. He whittled little pieces of the pemmican into the water. Before long the delicious smell of boiling soup filled the air.



INDIAN AND RAT.

We-sa-kay-chak dipped out a skin-bag full of the hot soup, took a sip of it, but, oh, how hot it was! How he did burn his tongue! Looking up quickly he saw one of his little animal friends, Wa-Chusk, the muskrat watching him from the edge of the river.

"Wa-chusk, oh, Wa-chusk," he called. "Please do me a favor. Swim over here to me."

The little animal paddled over to We-sa-kay-chak. The Indian bent down and tied the skin bag of hot soup to his tail.

"Now, Wa-chusk," he said, "swim out into the deep water and back to cool my soup."

Little Wa-chusk did as he was told. He paddled out into the deep water. On his way back near the shore an overhanging branch caught the skin bag, and the delicious pemmican soup spread over the water. Quickly We-sa-kay-chak grabbed for the bag to save part of the soup but he grabbed Wa-chusk's tail instead. As his hand slid down the tail to the bag, he stripped every bit of hair from the poor little rat's tail. And, do you know, that never from that day to this has a muskrat had hair on its tail!

New Year's Day

I remember the New Year's Day celebrations in old Kildonan much better than the Christmas Day celebrations. Christmas Day was the big church holiday. All Scotsmen celebrate New Year's Day as the big day of the year. The Indians like to celebrate this day too.

I am going to tell you about one New Year's Day when I was a young girl eighteen years old. Mary and I were startled from our sleep one morning by the sound of near-by shots. Then we remembered it was New Year's Day. Some of the young men were welcoming in the New Year by firing their guns into the air. We soon got up and went downstairs to help Mother. We would soon be having plenty of visitors.

Indeed, before breakfast was over, the first one arrived. He was a tall old Indian dressed in his best clothes. He was wearing a fringed buckskin suit, brightly decorated with beads. On his head was a full feather head-dress. His long, black braids had red and green ribbons woven into them. Father welcomed Chief John Hunter into our home. He gave him some tea and little round raisin-filled cakes. The old chief nodded and smiled when he saw that there were many raisins in the little cakes. Indians like raisins. He stayed for nearly half an hour. Then he left to visit other Kildonan homes. Before the morning was over we had had many visitors, both Indians and white neighbours.

In the afternoon, Mr. Colin Christie, one of the Kildonan young men, called to take Mary and me for a sleigh ride. Mr. Rob McDougall, a visitor from Eastern Canada, and several other young people were in the sleigh too. The horses pranced; the bells jingled; and off we went, skimming over the frozen snow.

"Let's call at one of the Indian homes," suddenly cried out one of the girls. "They like to visit us on New Year's Day. Why can't we visit them too?"

"A fine idea," we all agreed.

Mary wanted to go to John Hunter's house, because he was the chief, so Colin drove the horses in that direction. On and on we went, laughing and singing, the runners screeching on the hard, dry snow, until at last Colin stopped the horses on the edge of the Indian village.

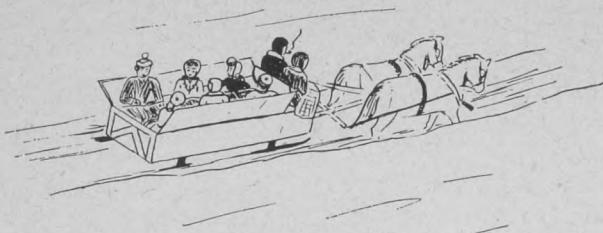
"Climb out, all of you," said Colin. "Let's celebrate Oo-chay-toe Kesitow with our Indian friends."

"What does that mean?" asked Rob.



PICTURE OF CHIEF.

One of the girls told him the Oo-chay-toe Kesitow was the Indian word for "kissing day". Once a year, on New Year's Day, the Indians kiss their friends and enemies too.



SLEIGH RIDE

We walked past the groups of Indians, everyone nodding and smiling to one another until we reached Chief John Hunter's house.

Colin knocked loudly on the door and to our grunted, "Ostum," which means "Come in," we entered.

If the old chief was surprised, he did not show it. He welcomed us as kindly as my Father had welcomed him that morning. His two daughters, about my age, seemed shy. They stayed back in the shadowy corner of the room. However, at a nod from their father, the girls came together with Mrs. John Hunter, came forward and shook hands with all of us.

Mrs. Hunter gave all of us cups of steaming hot black tea. We ate the lunch that we had brought with us.

We visited them just for a short time. They could speak very little English. We could speak very little Cree. The boys and the old chief tried to talk by grunts, nods, and smiles and waving of hands. We girls needed only to look at each other to start laughing. I'm afraid we were rude, but those boys and the old chief were a funny sight. But it was getting late now, so we got ready to leave.

Colin, who had gone to get the sleigh, now drove it up to the door. As we were getting in, the two shy Indian girls ran over to Rob, the new young man from the East. Throwing their arms about him, they each gave him a loud smacking kiss that made our horses start off as fast as the wind. Some other Indians standing near by laughed loudly. So did all of us in the sleigh. Poor Rob's face turned red as fire. It was a long time before we let him forget Oo-chay-toe Kesitow.

Grandmother's Wedding

When I was nineteen years old my grandfather and I were married. Weddings were always a time for merry-making in the Red River settlement. I do think that my mother and father gave me one of the nicest wedding ever held in Old Kildonan.

I remember how excited and happy I was that Thursday morning as Mother and Mary helped me put on the beautiful white satin dress that had come all the way from England. How gently they placed the lace veil on my head so as not to disturb my rows of black curls. When I was all ready I walked carefully down the old oak stairway to meet Neil, my grandfather, smiling proudly up at me. What a handsome young man he was!



GRANDMOTHER DRESSED FOR HER WEDDING.

He took my hand and we left the house. We walked down the road to the Kildonan Church with our wedding guests following. It was a long procession. I remember how proud my two little brothers were as they walked along dressed in their Highland kilts, holding up the train of my beautiful dress. We were met at the church door by our minister, Dr. Black. We entered and slowly walked down the aisle to join with him in the holy marriage service.

After the wedding was over, we all went back to my father's house to enjoy a big wedding dinner and dance. It had been a busy week for my parents. On Monday, Father had invited all the people of Kildonan to come to the wedding. On that day, too, the cooking had begun. Father hired "Old Man" Harper and John Auld to do the roasting. These two old fellows cooked the meat for every wedding. Oxen and sheep were killed. Great roasts of beef and mutton were hung on the spits before the open fireplaces. The two men turned the roasts to cook the meat evenly on all sides.

We had a jolly time at the first part, Wednesday night. Thursday's party was still more exciting. When we got back from church, everyone enjoyed a big meal of roast beef, roast mutton, boiled potatoes and plum pudding. I remember there were long tables set up all over the house, which left very little room for the dancers; so our guests danced in the neighbours' houses on each side of us.

Our neighbours were glad to let our guests dance in their houses. They were pleased to be able to help us out in this way. That is something you will notice over and over again about these early Red River settlers. They were always ready to help each other. They were willing to work together. This idea of working together to help one another is known as co-operation. If the people today could co-operate as well as these settlers did, there would be much less trouble and sorrow in the world.

The parties and feasting lasted till Sunday. On that day your grandfather and I, with our best man and Mary, my bridesmaid, drove to church and sat in one of the big box pews at the front. The minister blessed us. We received the blessings of our friends.

My mother and father had one more big dinner for us. Then we said goodbye. Neil took me to live at his father's house. There we had another wedding dinner and party. We lived there for about three months until our own house was ready for us.

But I think I have told you enough for this time, children. It is nearly nine o'clock. I shall tell you all about our new home the next time we have a story.

Grandmother's First Home

All the homesteads of the Red River settlement lay side by side. Each little farm faced the river and ran back in a long narrow strip for about two miles to the hay lands on the open prairies beyond. There was a wide road in front of the houses between them and the river. It was called the river road.

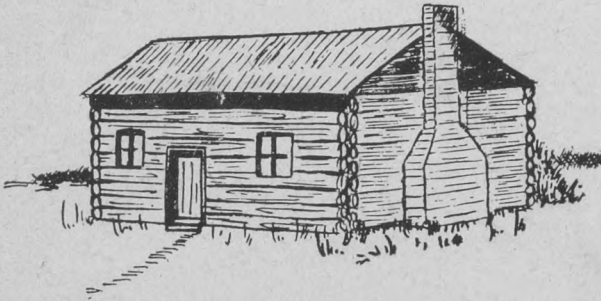


GRANDMOTHER'S HOME.

This was a good plan to have narrow farms side by side fronting on the river. We were all close to each other. We could help each other. We could all use the river for travelling and for fishing. The Indian didn't attack us or drive off our sheep and cattle. They might have done so if we had been living on lonely farms miles and miles from one another.

Your Grandfather's father had a fairly wide strip of land. When Neil and I were married, he divided his strip and gave half of it to us for our farm.

All that first fall after our marriage Neil worked hard to build our house. His father and my father and brothers worked with him. Often several of our kind neighbours helped him also. They chopped down trees



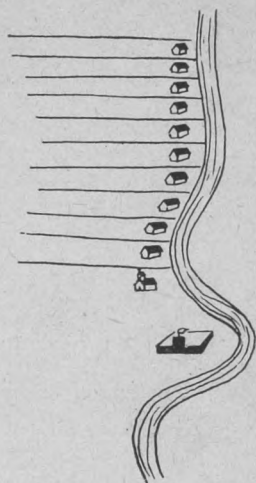
GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE.

They hewed them into smooth, straight logs. They hauled them to the spot we had chosen for our new home. It wasn't long until they had built a cosy little three-room house, right on this very spot where our big stone house stands today.

Your grandfather and I loved the view that we can see from the window here—the winding Red River, the broad river road beside it, and the smoke columns from our neighbours' chimneys.

We were warm and comfortable in the little log house. The strong oak logs kept out the cold winter winds. The blazing fire threw a cheery glow over the little rooms. Some of our furniture came from our parents' homes. Neil made two chairs and a table himself. Our big grandfather clock, my walnut rocking chair, and our silver tea set came all the way from Scotland. On the walls were Neil's two guns, a deer head, and a little cupboard which held my best dishes. I was very proud of a little embroidered wall motto, which I had made and hung on the wall. It said, "God Bless Our Home."

I thought I was the luckiest girl in the world to have such a lovely little house. You may be sure that I worked hard to keep it neat and tidy, or as my mother used to say, "As bright and shiny as a new pin."



STRIP FARMS NEAR THE RIVER.



FIREPLACE IN GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE.

When the time came for us to build a bigger, modern home, we couldn't think of a better place to build it than right where the old log house was. The men tore down the little house log by log. They used the logs over again to build the back part of the big house that we all live in today.

A Buffalo Hunt

Before I begin the story of the buffalo hunt, I am going to tell you a little about the buffalo itself. I don't think you children have seen a buffalo, although there are quite a number of them in the western park now. When I was a little girl thousands of them roamed the prairies.



BUFFALO.

From this picture in my old album you can see that the buffalo is a large animal, very much like a big bull. It is dark brown—almost black. It has a big hump on its back and sharp horns on its head. Its forehead, neck and shoulders are covered with long, shaggy hair.

The buffalo was very useful to the Indians and half-breeds. Before long the early Red River settlers found out how useful it could be. I'll tell you some of the uses right now. You'll be surprised to see

how many there were. Let's count them:

- (1) The carcass was used for meat. The best parts were the tongue and the hump. These were eaten fresh. The rest of the meat was made into pemmican.
- (2) The skin with the hair on it was used to make blankets, moccasins and shoes.
- (3) Tents were made from the skin, too.
- (4) The tanned hide was made into cushions and saddles.
- (5) Buffalo hair was used to stuff cushions and saddles.
- (6) The horns were made into cups and dishes.
- (7) Little bones were made into needles. A hole was burned through for the eye of the needle.
- (8) Scrapers were made from the big bones.
- (9) The sinews were separated and made into fine sewing thread.
- (10) The hoofs were boiled to make glue.

Before I begin the story of the buffalo hunt, I'd like to tell you how the buffalo protected themselves against storms and wolves. In the winter, when a howling blizzard would sweep across the prairies, the buffalo would stand huddled together facing the storm. Cows and horses always turn their backs to a storm. The buffaloes' broad shoulders and shaggy hair gave them more protection when facing it.

When the wolf packs were very hungry, they would attack the buffalo herds. Quickly the cows and calves would crowd into a small circle with the big bulls all around them. If a wolf tried to get a young calf, he was met by an angry bull that would toss him high into the air with his sharp horns.

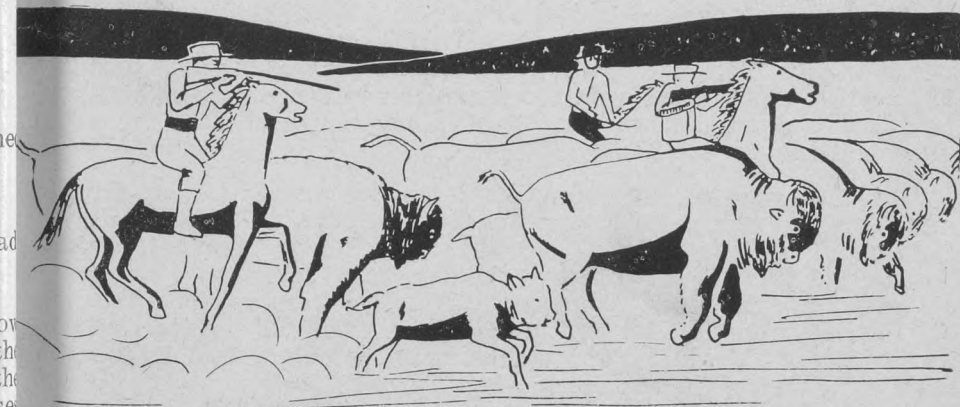
But I know you children want me to begin the buffalo hunt. I am going to tell you the story of a hunt that your grandfather was on the second year after our marriage. He wanted me to go, too, but your mother was just a tiny baby then, and the mosquitoes were very bad, so I knew that we had better stay home. I don't think I would have gone anyway.

There were always two big hunts a year—one in June and one late in August. It was a bright June day when our hunters left the Red River. This hunting party was a large one, made up mostly of Indians and half-breeds with their families. Quite a number of our young people went along too. Off they started—horses, riders, barking dogs and breaking Red River carts.

Your grandfather has told me all about this hunt many times. He said the hunters camped in a great circle each night. The Red River carts were drawn up to make the circle. The people, oxen, horses and tents were in the centre. Nearly everyone knew the camp rules which were:

- (1) No buffalo were to be hunted on Sunday.
- (2) No man could shoot at a buffalo until the signal was given.
- (3) A hunting party could stay only three days in one place.
- (4) If more than one man claimed a buffalo, it was divided equally among the ones who claimed it.

On the third day of the hunt the men saw a herd of buffalo about two miles away. They left the carts and oxen in the care of the women. They mounted their horses and went quietly toward the herd. They hadn't gone five hundred yards before the buffalo saw them. The big animals started off in the opposite direction at top speed. The men galloped their horses across the prairie. After a fierce chase, they were in the middle of the herd.



BUFFALO CHASE.

What a sight it must have been! At least five thousand of the animals were galloping in wild disorder, eyes flashing, manes tossing, and sharp horns reaching out to kill their enemies. What a noise there was too! Their hoofs thundered on the hard prairie. The dogs barked. Rifles cracked and wounded bulls bellowed with pain and anger. The hunters carried the bullets in their mouths. After each shot they would quickly shake a little more powder into the pan, and shove another bullet into place.

Your Grandfather told me of a funny sight that could easily have been a very sad happening. He was riding close to a young half-breed who was just going to fire at a fat bull. Suddenly the bull turned. The half-breed's horse became frightened. It jumped to one side. The saddle cinch snapped, the buffalo came on, and the rider, saddle and all, landed between the buffalo's horns. The buffalo was so surprised that with a toss of his head he threw the man high up in the air. He landed on the back of another bull and wasn't hurt at all. I think he must have been very frightened, don't you?

In an hour the hunt was over. The ground was covered with hundreds of dead buffalo. Twenty-five of them were your grandfather's. The hunters often marked their own buffalo by dropping a handkerchief or glove on the animal. By the time the hunters had claimed their buffalo the women in the Red River carts had arrived and the work of skinning and cutting up the buffalo began. Everyone enjoyed a big feast of buffalo hump and buffalo tongue that night.

During the next three days the pemmican had to be made. You should have heard me use that word often in the stories. Now I'll tell you what it was. Of course, you know it was dried meat, but perhaps you would like to know exactly how it was made.

The best buffalo meat was cut into thin slices about twenty inches across and about half an inch thick. The slices were dried in the sun for a while. Afterwards they were dried still further. They were strung on a stick and held over a small fire until they were dry and as hard as rock. Then the pieces were piled on a clean skin and pounded into chips and powder. This work of drying and powdering the meat took two or three days. In the meantime, some of the women and children had been busy picking wild berries—saskatoons, chokecherries and raspberries. Others had melted the buffalo fat. The pemmican maker mixed the fat, the berries, and the powdered meat altogether. They put the mixture into bags which they had made from buffalo skins sewn up with sinews. The mixture was packed it into the bags as solidly as they could. When the bags were full, hot fat was poured over the pemmican to seal it from the air. The mixture could be eaten just as it was, or cooked into a stew or hash. Do you think you would like to eat it?

As time went on, the buffalo hunts got larger and larger. Hunters came from the north, south, east and west to take part in the kill. The Hudson's Bay Company was offering a good price for buffalo hides. They bought pemmican too, but the hunters could make more money with less work from the hides. Thousands of buffalo were killed. Often more dead buffalo were left on the prairie than even the wolves could eat. Sometimes the hide, hump and tongue were the only parts of the animal taken. The rest of the carcass was left to rot in the sun. Such waste!

"What does it matter?" said the hunters. "There are thousands of buffalo left."



BUFFALO.

But there came a day when there were hardly any buffalo left. They had nearly all been killed. Hard times followed for the half-breeds and Indians. There were no hides to sell and no pemmican to eat. The settlers had their grain and cattle, but they too, missed the buffalo. How much better it would have been if the hunters had killed only as many buffalo as they needed as they had done in the very early days.

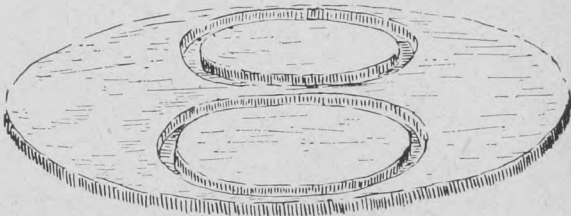
Hay Making

July 20 was always an important date in the Red River Settlement. That was the day that hay-making began each year. You remember, don't you, that I told you our farms were two miles long? Beyond the farms were the hay fields. The men always went out to the hay fields every summer, long before July 20 to pick out the best stands of hay for their own.

There is one hay-making that I remember especially well. I think I shall tell you about it. That year, on the evening of July 20, the haymakers pitched camp beside the hay fields. It looked like a tent town. No one went to bed that night. Big bonfires were blazing. Men were walking from tent to tent or standing in little groups laughing, talking and telling stories. Some of the young fellows were dancing the Red River jig to the music of a squeaky fiddle.

"It's twelve o'clock," someone called. "Come on, boys. Cut your circle before someone else does!"

Each man grabbed his sickle, dashed to the spot he had chosen, and began to cut a big circle around his patch of hay. Sometimes two men would have picked the same spot. In that case the man who got there first could claim it.



HAY CIRCLES.

On this particular day Old John Ross and his son, Robbie, were cutting a huge circle around the very best stand of tall prairie grass. Suddenly two of the young men stopped working and cried, "John Ross, your circle is too big. It is taking in our circle." The rest of the settlers stopped cutting. Yes, sure enough, Old John's circle was so big that it had enclosed the two smaller circles.

"That will never do," they all said. "John Ross, you have been greedy. You have tried to take more than your share. The other two shall keep their circles inside your big circle."

Old John grumbled, but he had learned his lesson. It does not pay to be greedy. The amount left to him was smaller than that of many of the other circles.

After the circles were marked, many settlers returned to the tents for a few hours sleep. It was nearly noon before the hay making really got started. For the next few days the men worked hard. They cut down the thick prairie grass with their sharp sickles. They heaped it into little piles to dry. Each day they turned the piles over so that the grass would dry all through. Then they built the little piles into big haystacks.

On the afternoon of the last day the smell of smoke filled the air. Everyone looked anxiously to the west. It seemed to be coming from that direction.

"A prairie fire," cried Old John Ross. "We must stop it before it gets our hay."

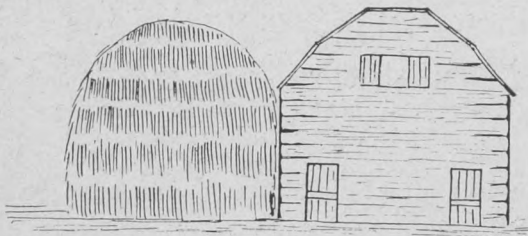
Quickly the men mounted their horses and galloped off towards the fire. Right in its path they built a row of little fires. These little fires spread very fast, blackening the prairie grass. The men watched the flames. Before they had spread too far they beat them out with sticks and buffalo robes. Then they set some more. They kept on in this way until they had burned a big black patch in the path of the prairie fire. When the prairie fire reached the black patch there was nothing left to burn so it died down and went out. The hay crop was saved.

All were feeling relieved when suddenly they saw that a few sparks had caught in the long grass and raced to a haystack! The weary men fought the flames with robes, sticks and their bare hands. It was a short, fierce fight. This time the fire was all out, but Old John Ross's haystacks were gone.

"It served him right," said some of the young fellows. "He was so greedy. He wanted three times as much as his share, anyway. Now he has nothing."

Poor old John looked very sad, but he said nothing. He had, indeed, learned his lesson.

The next day was Saturday. Hay-making was over. The Red River carts piled high with hay, made their creaking way back to the settlement. The young men on horseback galloped and raced each other home.



BARN.

The last to arrive home was Old John Ross. He had stayed behind to help his neighbour fix a wheel on his ox-cart. As he drove into his yard and down to the barn, his thoughts were on his lost hay. He was wondering what he would do for winter feed for his stock. All at once he stopped short. There

before his very eyes was the biggest haystack he had ever had!



OLD WINNIPEG.



WINNIPEG TODAY.

Winnipeg Today

I could tell you many more tales of the Red River, but it is getting very close to the summer holidays. You children will be busy with your June tests. Before you know it, you will be away with Mother to the summer cottage at Lake Winnipeg. I don't think we had better begin any more stories now. I hope you have liked listening to the Red River tales and hearing about pioneer days in old Kildonan.

As we look out of the window at the busy, bustling city of Winnipeg it is hard to believe that not so many years ago it was new prairie land with only a few settlers living here. Look at it now with its paved streets, its cars, buses and street cars rushing by; its big factories and lovely homes. Just think, your grandmother has lived to see all these changes. A little Scottish settlement on the banks of the Red River has grown to be the busiest and biggest city of the West!

The Gray Nuns Come West

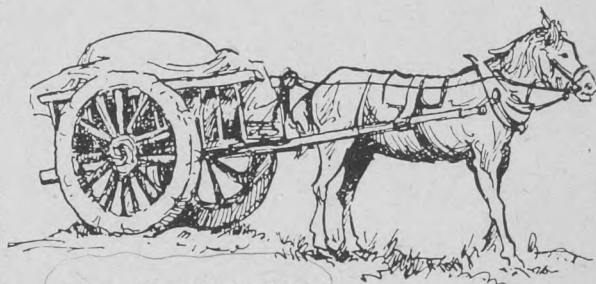
Long ago there were no comfortable trains to bring people from Eastern Canada to the Red River Settlement. People at that time travelled in canoes and in Red River carts. The young people who made the trip for the first time found it full of excitement and adventure.

A few years after the settlers started their homes in the Red River Valley, five Gray Nuns came from Montreal to the settlement. It took them fifty-nine days to make the long trip of over two thousand miles. The journey was very hard for them, but the French and Indian half-breeds who came with them were very kind. They did everything to make the nuns comfortable on their way out. These nuns had several adventures which they would never forget.

It was an adventure in itself to ride in a Red River cart. This was a two-wheeled cart pulled by an ox or a horse. The cart was made entirely of wood. Even the wheels were made of wood. There was no iron to make rims or nails. So wooden pegs held it together and kept the wheels on.

The big loose wooden wheels made a frightful noise as they turned on the wooden axles. The axles were never greased and a string of these carts could be heard for miles.

Some drivers insisted that each cart had its own peculiar screech and its own peculiar wobble as it rolled across the prairie. The big square box had no springs to make riding comfortable. This cart tipped over very easily if the horse or ox which was pulling it turned too sharply.



RED RIVER CART

One day as the nuns were travelling along the edge of a river the ox decided to have a drink. He turned sharply and toppled them all into the river. It took hours to dry out their things. As one nun said, "We thought we would never dry everything. Besides our own things, we had yards and yards of calico spread along the bank of the river."

Another nun tells us that whenever they sat on the hillsides to rest, they had to watch for snakes. One evening they were sitting quietly talking when she saw a movement under the hem of her skirt. She lifted it up and there was a snake: "I never thought I could scream so loudly," she remarked, as she told someone of it later.

One adventure might have turned out rather badly for the nuns if it had not been for the quickness of the drivers. As they were travelling along they saw a prairie fire in the distance. The wind suddenly turned, blowing the fire towards them. Quickly setting fire to the grass the guides burned over a small patch of ground for a fireguard. They unloaded everything onto this burned patch and turned the carts over the goods. They held the frightened, bellowing oxen. The nuns huddled under the carts while the fire swept by on both sides of them.

At last the nuns reached the mission at St. Boniface. A church had been built there before they arrived. The nuns took over the work

of painting the inside of it. The beautiful pictures that are still to be seen in it were painted by one of these nuns as she sat on a high scaffold built against the wall. Another of the nuns carved the statues and the pictures that are still hanging in the church.

The nuns opened schools for the children of the Metis. These kind people visited the sick and helped anyone in need.

The nuns often worked in the hayfields. One nun tells us about the only day she spent there, "I slashed the sickle around so quickly that the sisters would not let me cut hay again. They were afraid I would hurt myself."

The work was hard. There was not always enough to eat, but the nuns were happy. They were helping to make life a little easier for the settlers in the Red River Valley.

THE SCARLET FEVER EPIDEMIC

The rugged winters, the long hours of sunshine, hard work and plain food made the settlers a hardy lot. Sickness was not common. There was scarlet fever in the district one spring, though. A story was written about it by one of the Gray Nuns from St. Boniface. You can read it as she wrote it.

"I visited Pierre's family this morning. They are all down with scarlet fever. Nearly every house has a case or two. There is so little we can do for all this sickness. I have bathed hot faces until I can see them in my sleep, when I am able to sleep.

"I don't know what we would do without the kind women from Lord Selkirk's settlement across the river. Their children are ill, too, but they find time to bring us hot soup for the patients.

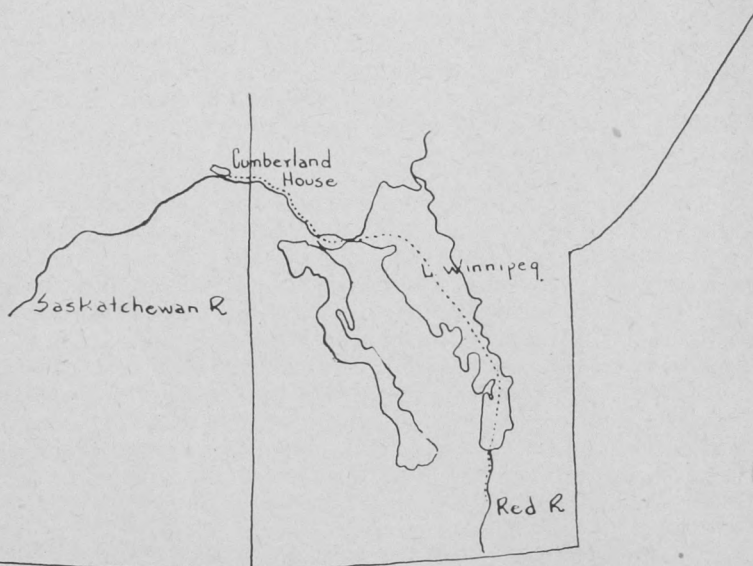
"Good Mrs. MacKay sent me off this afternoon to rest while she set to work to feed ten thirsty mouths and bathe ten hot faces.

"Bishop Bompas from the Anglican Mission keeps going night and day. The books he brought from the medical schools tell us how to treat the sick. They are a great help to us.

"We have heard that the Hudson's Bay Company is bringing a doctor to Fort Garry next year. I hope this is so. We really need more than one doctor for this big settlement.

"But I must hurry back to Mrs. MacKay now. Her family will be waiting for supper."

The Hudson's Bay Company began to build forts farther and farther west. They found they got more furs from the Indians when they went closer to their hunting grounds. The Factors took their wives and families with them to the posts. There were no schools at the posts and the



MAP OF MANITOBA AND SASKATCHEWAN.

children were sent to Eastern Canada or Scotland for their education. Then came the days when schools were built in the Red River Valley. The traders could send their children to these schools. One of the earliest schools was called St. John's. It was a boarding school for boys. One of the boys tells all about his days at school in a letter written to his parents at Cumberland House. This little map shows where Cumberland House and Fort Garry are. Follow the dotted line and you will see where the letter travelled to reach the boy's home.

St. John's School
Oct. 24,

Dear Mother and Father:

Mr. Pritchard, the head master, tells us there is a messenger going to Cumberland House tomorrow, and is giving us time to write letters to our parents.

I have been at school a month. I like it here very much. The fellows are fine. What great times we have!

I am sure you will want to know what our school is like. We have quite a large class room. The master's desk is at the front. The tables and benches are in the centre of the room. I wish I had been here last year. The seats were around the walls then, and the boys wrote on shelves that were fastened to the wall. I asked Mr. Pritchard why they were changed and he told me that the light was better in the centre of the room. He can talk to us much more easily when we are in a group.

We do our work on slates. These are really thin pieces of black stone. Mr. Pritchard uses slate pencils, but we haven't any. We use pieces of clay that we find down by the river. The older boys use pieces of wrapping paper instead of slates. They write with partly burned wood called charcoal, from the fireplace.

In school we study reading, spelling and ciphering. I like ciphering. It is fun to make the numbers do what you want them to. The problems are a little hard, but I like to work them out. We love to hear Mr. Pritchard read aloud. I hope to be able to read like he does some day. We read stories he writes on pieces of wrapping paper, but the bigger boys read from the Bible.

I always seem to be hungry, although we get plenty to eat at meal times. For breakfast we have potatoes, milk and bannock. For dinner we have pemmican as well. Pemmican! We are beginning to dislike the name. Mr. Pritchard knows how we feel, though, and often takes us down to the river where we prepare a great feast for ourselves. We catch fish. Sometimes the bigger boys will shoot a few ducks or snipe. Then what roasts we have! We clean the fish or birds and roll them in mud. We don't take off the scales or feathers. We place the fish or birds, well coated with mud, right in the burning fire. When we take them out of the fire, the clay has baked hard. We crack off the mud like breaking nut shells. The feathers and scales come off with the mud. Hm, how good these roasts are!

While we are waiting for the fish or birds to bake we play games. We sit on the rocks and the master tells us about Scotland. Sometimes we gather the plants and talk about them.

After supper we all gather in the big living room to read, talk or sing. I like to sing. Last night Mr. Pritchard asked me to sing "The Blue Bells of Scotland" by myself. I was scared at first, but once started, I liked it. After we sing, Mr. Pritchard reads a chapter from the Bible and leads us in prayer.

But I haven't told you where we sleep. Our beds are in one big room upstairs. The bunks are against the walls. The floor is covered with buffalo skins. Mr. Pritchard lets us play for fifteen minutes before we get into bed. What pillow fights we have! My feather pillow doesn't knock anyone over, but John McKay's is filled with buffalo wool, and it topples over every time. At the end of fifteen minutes Mr. Pritchard comes in, and we must all get into bed and keep quiet.

It's rather lonesome with the lights out. I think of your tucking Mary into bed and kissing her good night. I wonder what Rusty is like now? He will be a big dog when I get back in the summer. I hope you will soon be able to send me a letter telling me all the news of the fort.

Our time is up. I hope another messenger will go to Cumberland House again soon. I shall have lots more to tell you.

Your affectionate son,

James McRae.

SAVED BY A PIGEON

Old Stoneface had joined Mr. Black's church. He loved to list to the service and join in singing the hymns. One day Mr. Black called on him in his wigwam. They began talking about the early days of the Red River Settlement.

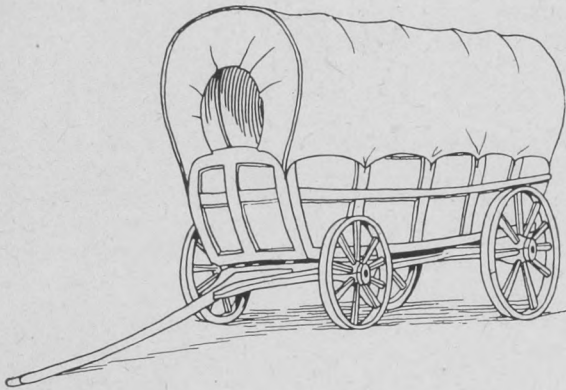
"I expect, Stoneface, you were here when the first settlers pulled their boats up at Point Douglas," Mr. Black remarked.

No, Stoneface was not here. He was out near Portage la Prairie.

"How did you feel about these white people coming to settle here on your land?" Mr. Black continued.

"We wanted them here," Stoneface had got started. "We were glad because we didn't have so far to take our furs, but most of all we liked their horses. They had very fast horses. We used to buy them for the buffalo hunt.

"I remember once seeing two of their horses that I planned on stealing. It was when the children from the trading posts came in to school at Fort Garry.



PRAIRIE SCHOONER.

"The Factor at Fort Ellis had four boys who came in to the schools at Fort Garry. There was no one to drive the covered wagon. The men were all away on the buffalo hunt. The Factor's wife, Mrs. McKay, said she would drive the wagon herself. I was at the fort when she left with the boys.

"How I wanted those horses! I made up my mind to get them on the trail. About an hour

after the covered wagon left, I started off in the opposite direction. As soon as I was out of sight of the fort, I made a large circle and came back to the trail. All day I followed Mrs. McKay and her four boys. I was careful not to let them see me.

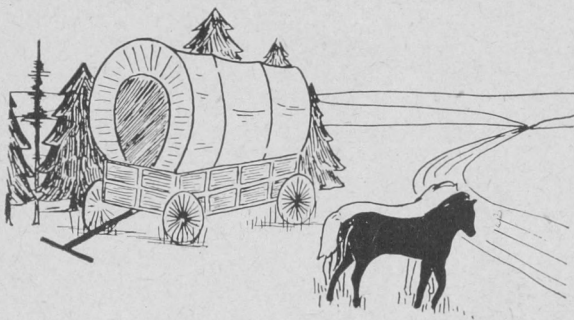
"That night they camped by a group of willows near a small lake. I knew I would have to kill them all. Just before dawn when they would be soundest asleep, I crept towards the wagon. My tomahawk was ready in my hand. As I was about to rise up out of the low bushes, the flap of the covered wagon opened, and out stepped Mrs. McKay with a gun in her hand. I thought at first she had seen me, so I kept very still. In a tall tree nearby were two wild pigeons. Raising the gun to her shoulder she shot one of the pigeons. Quickly reloading her gun, she shot the other one on the wing. She calmly walked over to the dead birds and picked them up.

Silently I left the place and went back to my horse. A woman who

ould shoot that well was no one to deal with at dawn, or any other
ime of the day. I decided to get my horses some other way."

"You are very happy now that you didn't kill Mrs. McKay and her
four boys, aren't you, Stoneface?" asked Mr. Black.

"Yes, very," replied the old Indian, "but they were fine horses."



CAMP.

A Loaf of Bread Tells the Story of Its Life

The click of the latch! A blinding light! A wave of cold air! A pair of mittened hands take me quickly from the oven. They rap me soundly to see if I am done and place me with several more loaves of bread on a large flat tray. Then I am left to cool off slowly.



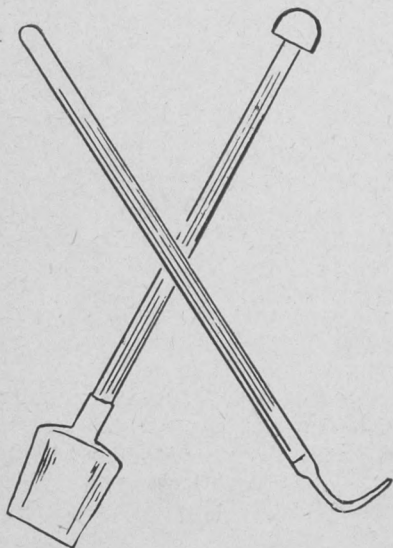
LOAF OF BREAD.

Ah, me! What a lot of work I caused before I became a loaf of bread! When I see the light in the children's eyes as they gaze at me—beautiful golden brown loaf of bread—I feel that I was all worth while.

My life begins with the wheat; first wheat, then flour, then bread.

The farmer living in the Red River Valley long ago had only

a spade and a hoe to dig and break up the soil to make the seed bed. It seemed as if that little piece of land would never be ready. But it was ready at last. The wheat seeds were scattered and a big branch of a tree dragged across to cover them with loose soil.



SPADE AND HOE.



SOWER.

It was rather dark and cramped under the soil for the seeds, but was warm and moist. Very soon each little seed felt a stirring inside. A little white root began to feel its way down into the soil and a little root went up trying to find the fresh air and sunshine. Hundreds of little green blades were soon waving in the breeze.

Alas! As in the rhyme,

*"The maid was in the garden
Hanging out the clothes,
Along came a blackbird
And pecked off her nose."*

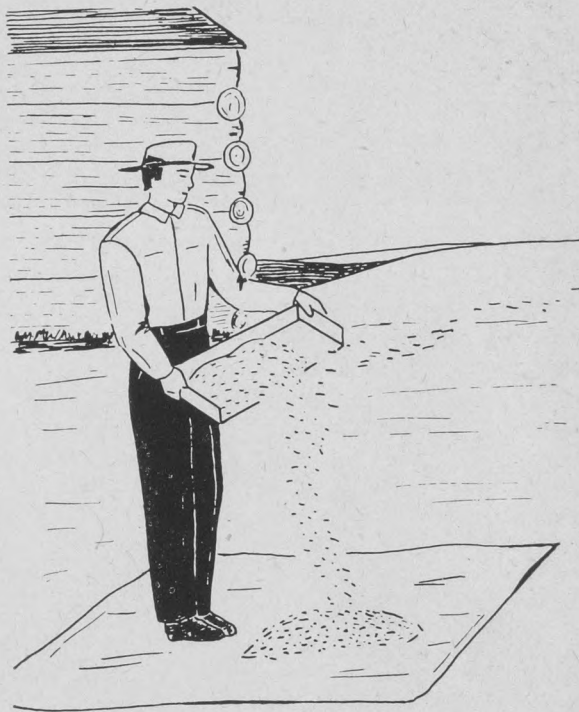
so hundreds of blackbirds pecked off the noses of the new wheat.

Scarecrows did not frighten the birds. The women and children had to drive away the little feathered thieves.

All summer the grain grew in the fields. The heads formed. The grain swelled and ripened.

The farmer and his wife sharpened their sickles and cut the grain. They bound the sheaves with thin willows gathered by the children. For several days the sheaves stood in the fields until they were dry. Then they were carried to the barn.

It was now time to do the threshing. The workers broke the willow bands and spread the wheat on the well swept floor. The men beat the grain with flails.



WINNOWING.

A flail is made of two sticks fastened together with a leather strap. Beating the grain with a flail broke up the heads and shelled the grain. The men gathered the chaff and grain into shallow boxes. When the chaff and grain were gently turned in the wind, the chaff blew away. The grain was left in the box. This was called "winnowing".

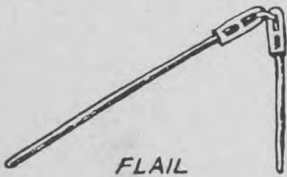
The grinding of the grain into flour came next. The women did this with a little stone mill called a quern.



FIELD OF WHEAT.

You have already heard of the useful quern. The top stone was turned around on the lower one by a little handle on one side. The grain was poured in a small hole in the centre of the top stone a little at a time. This little mill ground the grain into meal.

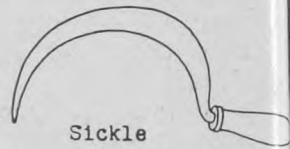
The farmer's wife made a soft dough out of this meal. It rose and filled the pan. She shaped it into loaves and let them rise again. When



FLAIL



STOOK



Sickle

they had risen, she carried them outside and popped them into a big clay oven that was in the yard. These ovens were used for many years in the Red River Valley because there were no stoves. While the bread was rising this oven had been heated.

That is the story of my life. As I sit here with my sister loaves, I feel that I am doing something to make these settlers of the Red River Valley healthy and happy.

Oh! It is supper time. Mary has been asked to bring a loaf of bread to the table. She is looking straight at me. Oh, well! A useful life is best even if it is short.

SPINNING THE YARN

*"Little Bo-Peep
Has lost her sheep,
And doesn't know where to find them."*

But we know where they are. They are down by the river being washed. They have already lost their tails but now they are going to lose their long fleecy coats.

Long ago in the Red River settlement the wool of the sheep was used for clothing and blankets which the women made themselves. Let us start at the beginning and see how wool becomes a piece of cloth.



SHEEP.

One warm bright day in early summer the sheep were driven into a shallow part of the river and thoroughly washed. Many of the sticks and burrs were picked out of their fleeces. Then the sheep were taken to a clean grassy hillside to dry in the sun.

When the wool was dry, the men sheared the sheep. They held the sheep between their knees while they quickly cut off the wool with large shears. All the wool from one sheep was called a fleece and usually weighed six or seven pounds.



SHEARING SHEEP.

After the shearing was finished, the job was taken over by the women. The fleece was soaked for several hours in cold water. Then it was washed six or eight times in soapy water. The soap had been made earlier in the spring from fat and wood ashes. When the soap had been thoroughly rinsed out, the wool was spread to dry on the grass. The clean, dry wool was packed in bales or sacks and put away until winter time.

During the long winter evenings the whole family worked on the wool. First it had to be "teased". This meant pulling apart the large bunches of matted wool. The wool was made as free as possible of sticks, straw and seeds.

Then came the carding. The carders had been made by the men from flat boards and nails. Small pieces of wool were placed between

the boards on the nails. By pulling the carders against each other the wool fibres were straightened and left in long thin rolls.

On the home-made spinning wheel the mother spun the carded wool into yarn. This meant long hours at the spinning wheel.

Nearly every home had a loom which had been made by the father of the family or by a neighbour.

Blankets and a coarse cloth called "hodden grey" were woven on the loom. To make the weaving easier, fish oil was worked into the woollen yarn.

Next came the fulling of the cloth. The boys did this by kicking it with their bare feet. This spread the threads and matted



CARDING.

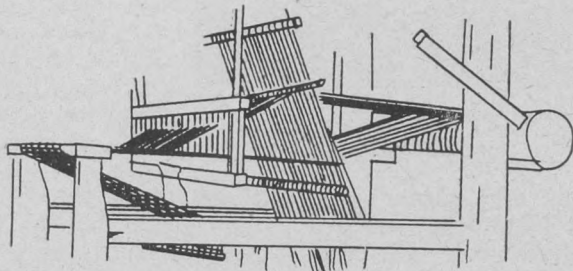
them slightly to make them wear longer.

There were no washing machines in those days. Washing the blankets and lengths of cloth was not easy. They were put in tubs of warm, soapy water. The girls worked the soap water through them with their feet. The wet blankets and pieces of cloth were far too heavy for the girls and women to lift. The men and bigger boys wrung them and spread them to dry in the sun.



SPINNING WHEEL.

They were now ready for the bed or to be made into coats, trousers and dresses for the whole family.



LOOM.

MEDICINE FOR THE RED RIVER SETTLERS

A few years after the colony had been started, Dr. Cowan came to look after the traders and their families at Fort Garry. He did all he could to make life more comfortable for the settlers, too.

The following conversation took place between Dr. Cowan and his wife one night on his return from a visit to a sick settler who lived across the river.

"It's good to see you home again," said Mrs. Cowan, as she helped the doctor off with his coat. "I was getting worried. With this storm brewing, I thought you might stay across the river tonight."

The doctor smiled, "I thought you knew me better than to think that a little storm would keep me away from home. All the same it's good to be back and to rest awhile."

"Young Pierre la France had a nasty accident and I had to use seven stitches to close the wound. I often wonder how these settlers managed before I came."

"Don't fret yourself," teased Mrs. Cowan. "Even though there was no doctor here before you came, they got along."

"And how did they do that, Mrs. Cowan?"

"Their methods were rough and ready," Mrs. Cowan replied, "but they brought results. They knew the plants that were used in Scotland for medicines and they found many of these same plants growing along the banks of the Red River."

"Dandelions were picked each spring and the leaves boiled for greens or used raw in salads. The flowers were used to make a wine which was as good as a tonic."

"The leaves of the plantain, which they called healing herb, were washed and bandaged on a bruise or swelling."

"Another favourite spring tonic was the juicy inner bark of the white poplar. In the spring the sap begins to flow up to the stems and it is easy to peel off the coarse green outer bark."

"I suppose that's where little Johnny Bain got his idea," interrupted Dr. Cowan. "I saw him chewing a piece of peeled wood a little while ago. When I asked him why he was doing that he quickly replied, 'Oh, it's sweet and I like it. Mother says I need it because I can't get early vegetables like she had in Scotland. Try a piece of it, Dr. Cowan. Be sure to take off all the green bark. Tap it first, then it will come off easily.'"

"The little chap was right. It did come off easily. I tasted the juicy inner bark. It was quite pleasant to take. It was sweet and slightly bitter. Johnny was also quite right about its being good for him when he couldn't get fresh vegetables. The sap of the spruce has been used as a cure for scruvy for a long, long, time. People drink a kind of tea made from it by boiling the bark."

"The red willow, too, was very useful," Mrs. Cowan said. "The inner bark was dried and used as tobacco. It also made a good poultice for a swelling or a sprain."

"Did they get any help from the Indians?" Dr. Cowan wanted know.

Oh, yes, the Indians helped them in many ways. John Auld can praise them enough. He says that many of the settlers owe their lives to the Indians. When the settlers first came here the Indians showed them what plants and berries could be eaten. One summer they lived on a few fish from the river and a wild plant, growing on the hillsides, which they called wild turnip."

"Bishop Bompas was a wonderful help, too, wasn't he?" asked Dr. Cowan.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Cowan, "when he saw how the people were managing by themselves, he sent for some medical books which told him how to treat the sick."

"I've seen those books," said Dr. Cowan. "They are very good and must have been a real help. I don't know how the bishop had the courage to take off a crushed leg, but he said that some one had to do it. He was all praise for the poor fellow who smoked hard at his pipe all the time the bishop was taking his leg off."

"We have always loved the Gray Nuns at St. Boniface for their kindness to the settlers," went on Mrs. Cowan. "They were always willing to come across the river to help anyone who was sick."



DOCTOR IN BUGGY.

"The settlers certainly have had their difficulties," continued the doctor, "but they seem to have been able to deal with most things. I have never met a more hardy and braver lot of people. They are the kind of people we need here in the west. This will be a great country."

THE FIRST NEWSPAPER

A newspaper at Kildonan! The news spreads through the settlement. People leave their work and rush to the new printing office of William Coldwell and William Buckingham. Sure enough, there is the little page feeling quite proud of itself leaning against a big fat book in the window. What is that at the top of the page?

The Nor-Wester, December 28th, 1859.

Everyone on the street has a copy. They read a few lines and shake hands with each other. Then they call out Mr. Coldwell and Mr. Buckingham and shake hands with them. They are jostled, laughed at, and heartily thumped on the back.

One red faced man bustles up, shaking his fist.

"Who said you could put my name in your paper? You haven't the story correct at all. It happened this way . . ."

But he is jostled aside. Everyone is too proud of that first newspaper today to listen to the complaints of this man. Next week the little story will be printed correctly and the red faced man will be quite happy, too.

Do you wonder how the people of the settlement received news of the world before they had a newspaper?

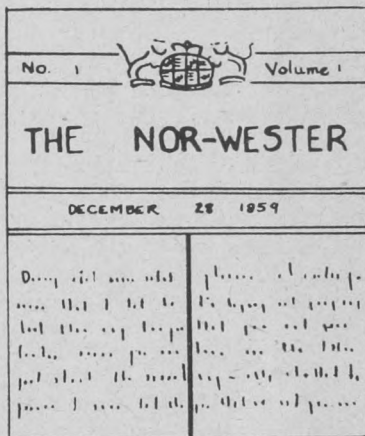
Letters from friends in their old homes across the sea in Scotland and Ireland came in the Hudson's Bay Company ships and down from York Factory in York boats. They could travel only in the summer. There were long winter months when no news reached the settlement at all. Then with the break-up of the ice on the river everyone began to watch eagerly for the boats. Great was the excitement when the first boat was seen coming up the river. Everyone shouted, "Here comes the boat, the mail is in!"

News also came from the men who had talked with the sailors on the ships.

Several years after the settlers came to the Red River they began to trade with the United States. Along came the pedlar with his pack full of goods and his head full of news. He was greatly welcomed in every home. The girls had to know the latest style in hats. The young men demanded to know if there was war between France and England. The older folk asked the price of wheat and barley in the south.

The Hudson's Bay traders at Fort Garry had books and magazines sent to them. Although these were often a year old, they were eagerly read and then loaned to the settlers at Kildonan.

But now they had their own newspaper. Everyone could buy a copy for his very own. This was a real event at the settlement.



PAPER IN WINDOW.

Pages from Jean Ross's Diary

The Queen's Birthday



JEAN ROSS.

May 23: "Everyone has been excited for weeks. Tomorrow is Queen Victoria's birthday. We are all going to the Hudson's Bay post at Fort Garry to the celebrations there."

"It was cloudy and a few drops of rain fell this morning. We were afraid that it might rain tomorrow. The clouds cleared away by noon, so we were all happy again.

Young Mr. Donald thinks his big black horse is going to win all the races. He has been galloping madly up the road and over the hills training her. We all rush out and cheer wildly at he dashes past.

John has been practising the broad jump. He says he jumped six inches farther today than he did yesterday.

"We are taking lunch with us to the picnic. Mother had the meat roasting and plum pudding boiling right after breakfast today. Mary and I thought we would never finish peeling potatoes this morning. We told Mother we would not eat that many. She said we must take a few more than we would need because there is always some extra person we can invite to eat with us at a picnic.

"I sewed my new dress all this afternoon. It looks very nice. It really isn't new. Mother and I made it out of one of Grandma's old dresses but it looks almost new. I like the big ruffly collar that Aunt Susan gave me to wear with it.

"Mother sent me to bed early lest I be too tired to enjoy myself tomorrow, but here I am writing in my diary. I must stop now, and hop into bed."

May 24:

"It is ten o'clock. We are waiting for the barge that will call at 10:30 to take us up the river to Fort Garry.

"Mother called me to help with the chores long before the sun was up this morning. We had to start them early that we might be ready to go on the barge when it came. We worked so fast that we had finished everything an hour sooner than we had expected. I put on my new dress and helped Mother dress the twins. Then she asked Mary and me to look after them while she helped the bigger boys get ready.

"Will the time never go? I'm nearly worn out trying to keep track of those boys. Dougal got a black stick and I had to wash his hands and face again. We lost Donald. He was half-way to the river looking for the barge. Mary is telling them a story now.

"There goes the whistle. Oh dear, where is my coat?



PICNIC TABLES.

"We are back home again. It is evening now. We have had a perfectly wonderful day.

"When we started off this morning, I felt like a lady sitting in my new dress up at the front of the barge. Mrs. McVie said I looked quite grown up, but Katie only scowled. I think she wished she had a new dress too.

"As we came near Fort Garry, we could see the flags flying and the Metis hurrying about in their bright shirts. The Metis are French and Indian half-breeds from across the river at St. Boniface. Everything looked gay. We cheered as our barge came up to the wharf.



TOSSING THE
CABER

"We ate our lunch at large tables under the big trees. La! I ate so much, I thought the seams of my new dress would burst. Mother had packed cold roast beef, bannock, plum pudding and potatoes. We warmed the potatoes and plum puddings over the big bonfires. The Hudson's Bay traders made huge kettles of tea and we could help ourselves to it.

"After lunch we all gathered out on the open space in front of the Fort. Sir George Simpson stood on a high platform. He said he was pleased that we had come. He reminded us that although we were a long way from our homes in Scotland, we were still subjects of Queen Victoria. Everyone cheered loudly. With the bagpipes playing, we all stood up and sang, "God Save the Queen."

"Then the men cleared a big space for the fun to begin. The little children ran their races first. Can wee Jamie McBride run! He is only nine, but he was far ahead of all the boys up to twelve. I guess I can run, too. I didn't think I could after eating such a big dinner, but I tried it anyway. Katie McVie didn't like it when I passed her and won the race.

"When the children's races were over the young men held their races and jumping contests and tossing the caber. Tossing the caber looked so hard. The men held the long heavy poles upright and then tossed them forward. How they flew through the air!

"My brother won the jumping contest, but Mr. Donald beat him by two feet in the caber tossing.

"We girls could hardly wait for the dancing to begin. First came the Sailor's Hornpipe. This is not a true Scottish dance but is always done as a tribute to the Queen and her Navy.

"We held our breath as Mr. Murray came forward with his swords for the sword dance. Of course, we knew he would win. He very carefully placed his sword on the ground and the sheath across it. Robbie Donaldson began playing the bagpipes. Then Mr. Murray began to dance. How quickly his feet went through the different steps! Not once did he touch the sword or sheath. A great many more men were dancing, but I watched only our own Mr. Murray.

"Many more dances followed and then came the Seann Triubhas. Now we girls had our chance. I was pleased to have a new dress to wear when I was dancing. I loved the movement and sway as our feet went through the different steps. There are no prizes for the girls' dances, but I was very glad that Katie McVie would feel happy when everyone said that she had danced best.

"Last of all came the horse races. I was so excited I couldn't stand still. How handsome the ponies looked with ribbons in their manes and the buckles of the bridles and saddles shining in the sun! They seemed all excited, too. They pranced around and tossed their heads. The Metis with their small, quick ponies couldn't run as fast as the big racers brought out from England. Mr. Donald's big Black Bess easily won in the races. We yelled at the tops of our voices as she dashed by.



SCOTCH DANCING.

"When the races were over, the Indians from Pembina rushed forward to make the first bids on the horses for the buffalo hunt. We shall all miss seeing big Black Bess. Mr. Donald was quite excited about getting so much money for her. He says he can use the money to buy and train two horses for next year.

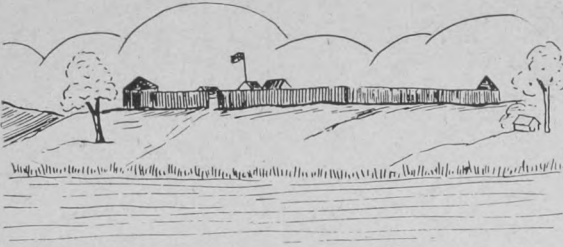
"We had supper under the big trees and then started back home on the barge. The stars shone brightly and the moon came up over the hills. Oh, how tired I was! Donald and Dougal were soon fast asleep. We all sang songs as the barge floated down the river towards home.

"Mother just came in to see if I were asleep. She smiled when she saw me still writing. She asked me if I had enjoyed the day. She told me I must not think the picnic we had been at today was just an ordinary picnic. She said the games and dances that we had seen and taken part in were just like the ones that she had seen and taken part in in Scotland. She hopes we will always remember our old Scottish customs wherever we are. She says these games and sports are a part of old Scotland that we can always keep with us in the new land."

THE FUR TRADE

During the winter the Indians hunted the wild animals for their furs.

The skins were cleaned, dried and packed into bundles and in the spring or summer the Indians took these furs to the nearest trading post. The following story of trading with the Indians is told by the factor's wife at Fort Douglas.



FORT DOUGLAS.

TRADING WITH THE INDIANS

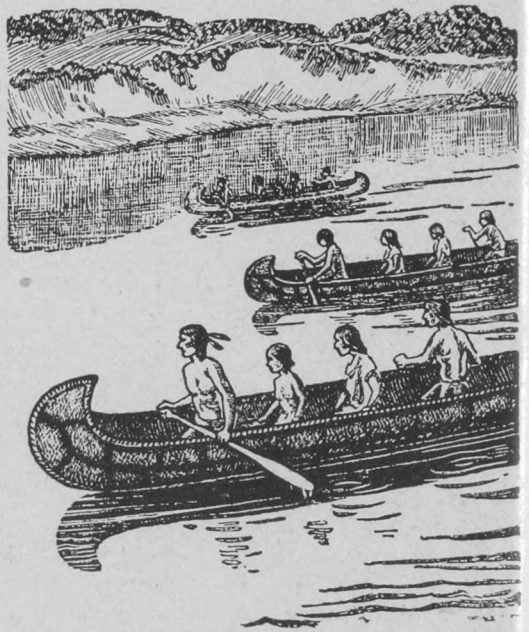
It was late in the spring. The snow had nearly all melted. The ice had gone from the river. I had already found a few buttercups and violets on the hillsides. Wild geese and ducks had been passing overhead for days. They were going farther north to the barren lands to nest. These lands are low and covered with moss and flowers.

The factor and I were sitting at the door of our house watching the sunset when I saw hundreds of canoes coming down the river. This was the fur brigade that came down every year. For weeks I had been hearing of the Indians coming to trade their furs for goods in the store.

"Look, John," I cried, "The Indians are coming. Are you ready for them?"

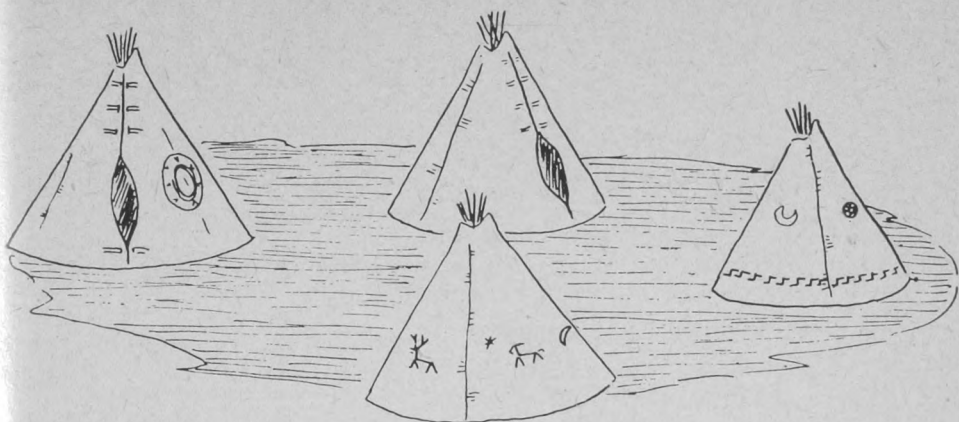
"Oh, yes," he replied, "we have spent the last few days putting things on the shelves and placing the brightest colored goods on the counters."

"Will they come here to-night?" I wanted to know. John told me that they would not come near the fort until the morning. He had to hurry away to the fort to be ready to fire the guns as a salute to the Indians. As the canoes came near the fort, the Indians fired their guns into the air. The small cannon at the fort were then fired in reply.



CANOES.

I watched the Indian women, who are called squaws, putting up the tents. They lighted their fires and all the Indians gathered for their evening meal. Soon all was quiet except the odd bark of a sleepless dog.



WIGWAMS.

The next morning we were up early to be ready for the Indians. As I had been at the fort only a short time, John asked me if I would like to go to the store to see the trading. I was pleased. I had wanted to go but thought I had better stay inside my own house. He told me I could go, but that I must stay behind the counters. I would have to stay out of sight until the trading began.

When all was ready, the factor and several of the men went down to the landing place to meet the Indian chief. I could see the squaws and young braves unloading the canoes. The chief and older Indians were brought up to the trading room. Since I had to keep out of sight, I was in a back room watching through a crack in the door.

The chief and his men sat cross-legged on the floor. They all took out their pipes. John handed them some tobacco. All smoked in silence for a long time. I was getting tired of waiting when finally the chief put his pipe away. He stood up. What a tall, handsome man he was! How well he looked in his beaded buckskin shirt and leggings! The feathers on his head made a fitting crown. He was like a king. He spoke quietly but with great dignity. He told what tribes of Indians were with him and how many canoes were in the brigade.

John answered the chief by saying that he was very pleased to have the Indians come to the fort. He said he hoped they would be happy while here. Then he gave the chief a full suit of clothing. How proud that Indian chief was! He strutted about in a coarse cloth coat of bright red. The waist coat and breeches were of coarse woollen cloth. A red checked shirt and bright blue stockings completed the outfit. The other Indians were very proud of him. I liked him better in his buckskin clothing.

The guests were then taken back to their camp. Everyone was given some brandy, pipes and tobacco. When the brandy was gone, the pipe of peace was passed around and smoked. Our men had to join in this. I hated to think of their putting the pipe to their mouths, but it was an old Indian custom they had to follow.

The welcome over, back they came to the fort to start trading. At one time the Indians had traded their furs for beads and toys. Those days were gone. They now wanted guns, powder, shot, hatchets and knives

for hunting. They also needed coats, blankets, pots and pans, food and tobacco.

At home we used money when we bought or sold goods. Here the traders and Indians use beaver skins. Each article is priced at so many beaver skins. A good copper kettle costs two beaver skins. A gun might easily cost ten or even fifteen beaver skins. One beaver skin would buy two hatchets, or four pounds of shot, or three packages of tea. Skins of other animals were valued in terms of beaver skins. Thus eight weasel skins equalled one beaver, or two otter equalled one beaver. All selling and buying was figured at so many beaver skins, and everyone got along just as well as though real money had been used.

When the women came in to buy the bright cloth for dresses and shawls, I slipped into the store to see them better. They touched each piece before deciding which one to take.

The little brown papooses were dear! They looked shyly out from their bags strapped on their mothers' backs. One little fellow giggled aloud when I tickled his chin. The mothers smiled at me. I knew then that they were my friends.

The next day Mrs. Polson, who is also living at the fort, went with me to the river to visit the Indian women in their camp. How pleased they were to see us! We could not talk to each other, but we made signs to show that we wanted to be friends. I wanted to see their baby cradles. One mother took her baby out. I held the sweet little fellow while she showed me how the cradle was made. Then she tucked him back in again.



PAPOOSE.

We had brought some beads with us and the Indian women showed us how to sew the beads on the toe of a moccasin. They also showed us how to sew patterns with porcupine needles. They were delighted when we gave each of them some of the beads.

Mrs. Polson and I had brought the Indian women as many little raisin cakes as we could carry. When they saw the raisins in the cakes they were as pleased as children. It was time to go so we waved good-bye and hurried back to the fort.

The trading took several days. At last the skins were piled in the fort and the Indians had packed up the goods they had bought. Down came the wigwams to be rolled up. The goods were placed in the canoes. The Indians took their places. They held their paddles upright in front of them as a salute and were off for their winter homes again.

Everything was quiet. A feeling of loneliness came over me. I felt I had waved good-bye to real friends. Some would return with the fur brigades next year, but many we would never see again.

Once more the sunset was flaming in the west as John and I walked slowly towards our home.

LOUIS RIEL

The Red River Settlers were not the only people living in the valley of the Red River. There were three small settlements. The first group of Scottish and Irish settlers landed at a point on the river which they called Point Douglas. The little settlement which they formed was at first known as Colony Gardens. Later it came to be known as Kildonan. The Metis, another group of settlers, had their homes across the river at St. Boniface. The families belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company also had a settlement. They lived at Fort Douglas or Fort Garry as it was called a little later. The people of these three settlements were good neighbours. They worked together. They helped each other in time of need. The children from all the settlements went to the same schools. The young people went to the same picnics and parties. Most of the time all the people in these settlements were like members of one big happy family living a short distance from each other.

However, we do hear of a very sad time when they were not happy together. This was the time when Louis Riel stirred up bad feeling and made the Metis feel very unfriendly towards the settlers at Kildonan and Fort Garry. Louis Riel told the Metis that the Canadian Government was going to take their farms from them. This was not true.

The farms of all the settlers were long and narrow. Each farm faced the river. The Government decided that square farms, like our own farms here in Alberta, would be much easier to number. It would also be easier to build roads around them. The Government hired men called surveyors to mark off the new farms. These men would not explain to the Métis that instead of having the long narrow farms, they would have square ones. The Metis thought the government men were going to take their farms from them and give them to other settlers. If the surveyors had been kind and explained what they were doing, no trouble would have come.

It was very easy for Riel to make the Metis believe that they were going to lose their farms. He persuaded them to go with him to Fort Garry and make him the governor. He armed his men with guns from the Government supplies. He took food and homes that he needed for his own men from the Government people. The real governor and many other people he put in prison.

Thomas Scott, one of the settlers that Louis Riel and his men had put into prison, managed to escape. Then he tried to help some of the other settlers to get out of prison, too. Riel's men caught him. He was put back into prison. A few days afterwards Riel had him taken out of prison. He was led out into the yard and shot.

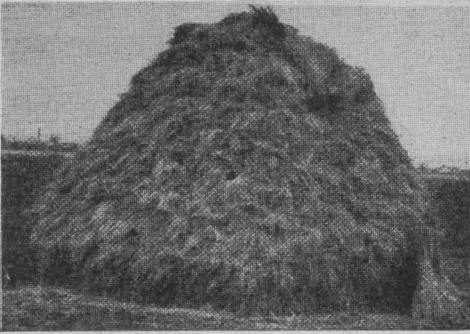
The people of Eastern Canada heard what Riel was doing. They sent an army to help the settlers. When Riel heard that it was coming he fled to the United States with a few of his men.

The Metis settled on their farms once more. The government men came back to finish marking out the farms but this time they were careful to explain to the Metis that they were not taking their farms away from them. Once more life went on pleasantly in the Red River Valley.

CUSTOMS AND LAWS

When the settlers first came to the Red River Valley, they brought their laws with them. These laws were not written down in books as our laws are today. They were brought over in the hearts and minds of the settlers. They were really customs that had been handed on from father to son for a long, long time. These customs were thought of as the right thing to do, and those who broke the rules were not liked by their neighbours. Most of the settlers would never have thought of breaking the rules. They knew that those rules were for the good of themselves and their families, as well as for the good of their neighbours.

The first settlers did not lock their doors. They did not need to do so. It was a rule that no one ever touched the things in another person's house. That was one law, or custom, or rule, if you like. Another rule was to help others. If a settler was ill or in need, his neighbours got together and helped him.



HAY STACK.

One cold winter's night, a farmer was awakened by a bright glow at the window. It couldn't be the northern lights. It was too red, and he could smell smoke. He jumped up quickly and found that all his hay stacks were on fire. The barn was in danger, but it was too late to save the hay. The loss of hay to a settler was a terrible thing. There was a long, cold winter ahead. There were two cows and a team of oxen to feed, and not a wisp of hay to give them.

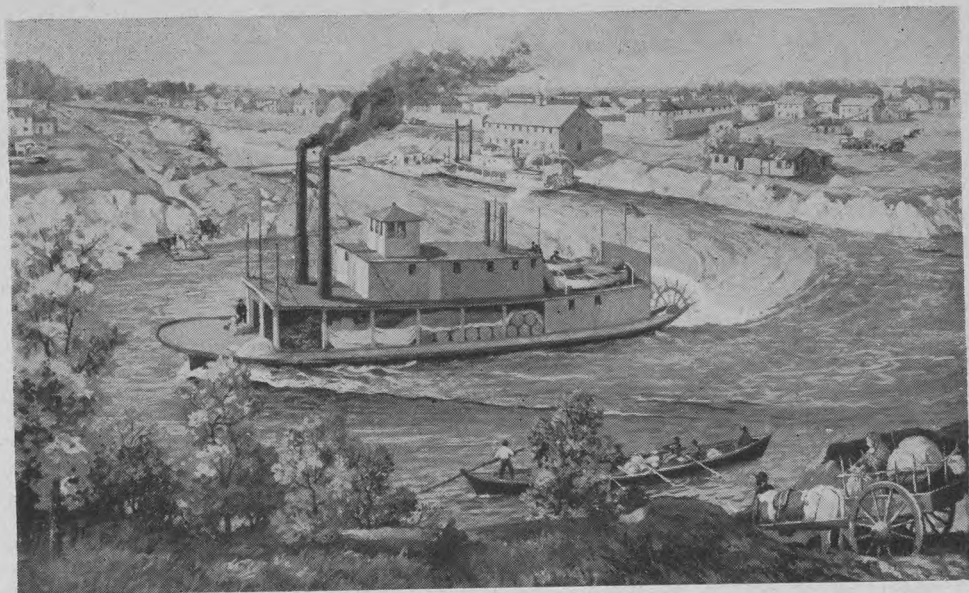
The farmer slept little that night. First, one neighbour knocked at his door, then another. They had seen the flames and hurried over to see what it was all about. By the time they had all arrived, the flames were dying down and only the smoking black ruins showed where the hay had been. This was serious. Something had to be done.

"Don't worry, John," one of them said. "We'll see you through. I can let you have a load of hay."

Another farmer said that he could spare a load. Before they left, they had decided that, among all the farmers at the settlement they could spare enough hay to carry his stock through until the grass grew in the spring. This is an example of the rule of helping others. It is still one of the best rules we can follow.

New settlers were always given a pleasant welcome when they came to the settlement. Everything was done to make them feel at home, and to help them set up their houses and barns.

When there were few people in the colony, few laws were needed. But as more people came, the set of rules began to grow. At first these new rules were made by Governors like Captain Miles Macdonell and Sir George Simpson. Later, some of the settlers were chosen to help make the laws and see that they were obeyed. The first group of this kind was called the Council of Assiniboine. It was made up of Sir George Simpson



GATEWAY TO CANADA'S GRANARY.
WINNIPEG, 1872.

Courtesy Confederation Life.



WINNIPEG AS IT IS TODAY.

Courtesy Canadian National Railway.

and fifteen of the settlers. Many years later, the Council had grown to include a great many people and was called the Government of Manitoba.

Now we come to the end of our book. In our stories we have visited the early settlers of the Red River Valley. We have enjoyed good times with them and felt sorry when they had misfortunes. We have seen them when they were fighting for their lives and when they were happy at picnics, weddings or dances. We have seen them building their homes, their churches and their schools.

Time changed the way of life in the Red River Valley. More settlers came. The children grew to be men and women. New laws were made. The settlement grew into a large community. The tiny village of Kildonan became a town, and later a city—the present city of Winnipeg.

We cannot see the Red River Valley as it was when Captain Miles Macdonell took the first settlers there, but this little poem written by a great American poet has given us a fine picture of the Valley. It helps us to remember the spot as it was in the days of long ago.

“THE RED RIVER VOYAGEUR”

*Out and in the river is winding
The links of its long red chain,
Through belts of dusky pine-land
And gusty leagues of plain.*

*Only at times a smoke wreath
With the drifting cloud-rack joins—
The smoke of the hunting-lodges
Of the wild Assiniboins!*

*Drearily blows the north wind
From the land of ice and snow,
The eyes that look are weary
And heavy the hands that row.*

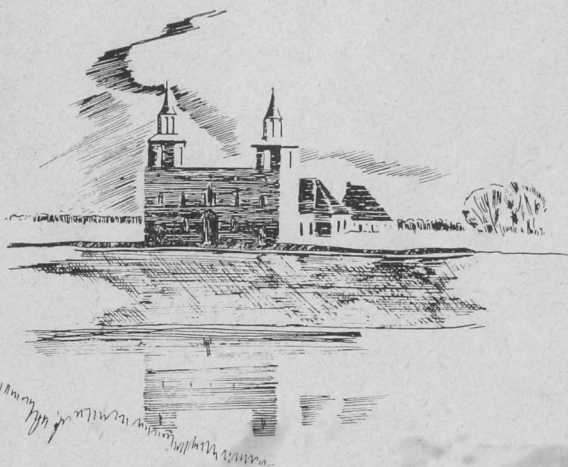
*And with one foot on the water,
And one upon the shore,
The Angel of Shadow gives warning
That day shall be no more.*

*Is it the clang of the wild geese?
Is it the Indian's yell,
That lend to the voice of the north wind
The tones of a far off bell?*

*The voyager smiles as he listens
To the sound that grows apace,
Well he knows the vesper ringing
Of the bells of St. Boniface.*

*The bells of the Roman Mission
That call from their turrets twain,
To the boatman on the river,
To the hunter on the plain!*

John Greenleaf Whittier.



ST. BONIFACE MISSION.

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TALES OF THE RED RIVER

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Tales of the Red River

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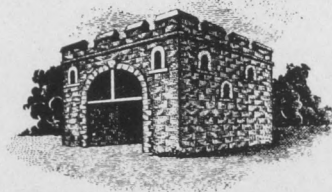
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